

January 10, 2023

North Dakota Senate Human Services Committee

Madame Chairman Lee and Committee Members,

My name is Tim Mathern and am here to introduce SB 2125. I serve on the Senate Appropriations Committee where we make recommendations on funding guardianship services. Many guardians are involved in developing health care directives. I helped start the corporate guardianship program many years ago at Catholic Family Service, now Catholic Charities of North Dakota.

Susan Drenth, an attorney who does legal guardianship work, contacted me this fall to address a problem with the execution of health care documents. I contacted other guardianship agencies in North Dakota and upon their approval, I introduced this bill. This bill simplifies the health care directive acceptance issue following the appointment of a health care agent by eliminating a return affirmation before the directive takes effect. It tracks what is done in other states.

I trust that others who know the details better than I will explain this further. I support efforts to get services to vulnerable people as soon as possible and I think this change works in that direction.

I ask you for a Do Pass recommendation on SB2125.

Thank you.

Senator Tim Mathern