

Testimony Prepared for the  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
January 18, 2023. By Genny Dienstmann  
North Dakota Association of Counties



**RE: Senate Bill 2153**

Chair Lee and Senate Human Services Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2153. I am Genny Dienstmann with the ND Association of Counties. I also served as a member of the ND Health Council from 2013 through May 2021 and was Chair of the ND Health Council from November 2017 through November 2020.

During my tenure on the Health Council, we handled a number of issues, including updating TENORM rules, creating/passing administrative rules for medical marijuana and creating core functions for a public health unit. Unfortunately I, along with many others who worked on these core functions, were not aware they were not approved in Administrative Rules .

It is important to note, the Health Council worked directly with the ND Department Health staff and Local Public Health Units to create these core functions. There was full support from everyone involved and public input was also requested. We made a concerted effort that no additional responsibilities would be added to the core functions, so existing health units would not have to implement new services.

These core functions were brought to the full Health Council for review and approval, which passed unanimously. They were then forwarded to the ND Attorney General's Office for legal review and approval to be included in the Administrative Rules under the Department of Health.

It was brought to my attention during the 2021 legislative session, there was no clear definition of the core functions of a public health unit. After inquiring with the ND Department of Health and the Attorney General's Office, I was informed the rules exceeded the Department of Health's authority and therefore were not approved.

Chair Lee and committee members, I strongly support SB 2153 as written as it affirms what the Health Council intended to do in 2016/2017 when creating the core functions for a public health unit.