

**Testimony of Shannon Schutt
North Dakota Recreation & Park Association
To Senate Judiciary Committee
In Support to HB 1459
Tuesday, March 7, 2023**

Chair Larson and members of the Committee, my name is Shannon Schutt, and I am the executive director of the North Dakota Recreation & Park Association (NDRPA). We represent more than 900 members, primarily park districts, and work to advance parks, recreation and conservation for an enhanced quality of life in North Dakota.

We are in support of HB 1459 in an effort to deter the sale of drugs in or near parks. We have also requested to amend the bill to replace “public park” with “park property.” We feel an amendment would provide clarity as to what property is covered. As the bill is written someone may argue a trail, the parking lot of a park, etc. are not a “public park.” However, majority of park property are areas where children and families play and recreate such as open spaces, trails, greenways, and water and recreation facilities. Providing safe recreation opportunities for our citizens and visitors is essential to maintaining North Dakota’s commitment to a high quality of life.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for HB 1459 for safe areas to play and recreate.