

Testimony
Senate Bill No.2077
Senate State and Local Government Committee
Senator Roers, Chairman
January 6, 2023

Chairman Roers, and members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee, I am James Knopik, Manager of Addiction and Prevention Program and Policy with the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) Behavioral Health Division. I appear before you in support of Senate Bill No. 2077, which was introduced at the request of the Department.

The Department's Behavioral Health Division is responsible for administering the state's gambling disorder prevention and treatment fund in accordance with North Dakota Century Code 50-06-21. These funds are used to provide gambling prevention and treatment services for individuals in the state with a gambling disorder. Previously the Department had contracted with Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota to provide these services. With the closure of Lutheran Social Services in 2021 the Department transitioned the gambling treatment employees to the Behavioral Health Division allowing individuals in need of gambling disorder treatment to continue receiving their services and preventing an abrupt stop to gambling disorder treatment services in North Dakota.

The proposed change in this Bill amends section 50-06-21 of the North Dakota Century Code regarding gambling disorder services. Page 1, lines 9 and 10 modifies the language of shall to may. This change would allow the Department to continue to administer the problem gambling funds for prevention and treatment.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to try to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you.