

House Bill 1012
House Appropriations—Human Resource Division
January 27, 2025
Brenda Stallman, Traill District Health Unit

Good morning, Chair Nelson and members of the House Appropriations—Human Resource Division Committee. My name is Brenda Stallman, and I am the Executive Officer for Traill District Health Unit located in Hillsboro. Traill District Health Unit provides public health services for the communities of Hillsboro, Mayville, Hatton, Clifford, Galesburg, Grandin, Buxton, and Reynolds.

NURSE HOME VISITS. SCHOOL NURSING. TB RESPONSE.
DISEASE PREVENTION. HEALTH EDUCATION.
JAIL NURSING. CAR SEAT DISTRIBUTION. VACCINATIONS.
STAFF SALARIES & BENEFITS. NUISANCE COMPLAINTS.

Members of the Committee, these are just a few of the responsibilities local public health units have that do not have designated funding for. We all juggle grants that change in scope and availability, but many of the duties we take on, like the previously mentioned items, do not have funding earmarked for them.

This is why state aid assistance provided by the ND legislature is so imperative. While what was appropriated in past sessions has been very carefully allocated to the needs of our individual units, an additional \$2 million was sought in Governor Burgum's budget to cover the increased cost of delivering our services. Because this request is not

currently in the budget, we are asking that the additional \$2 million requested be restored for a total of \$10 million.

Ten million dollars divided over 28 health units that provide public health services to all 53 North Dakota Counties is a very wise investment. An investment that is necessary to help keep our seniors in their homes, diseases out of our schools, churches, and communities, and our citizens safe and healthy.

At Traill District Health Unit, state aid funds represent 6% of our total budget. We are facing loss of some of our current grant funding, yet the needs of the residents in our communities do not diminish. Instead, as people grow older and family members do not reside close by, our aging population seeks additional services. Our jails are full, and the medical needs of the inmates are complex and costly to manage. All three of the nurses at our agency, me included, have been working at TDHU for 30 plus years. Staff turnover is costly and will be substantial moving forward. Hiring professionals in public health and rural communities is difficult and costly.

I hope you agree that public health is a needed investment to keep our communities strong. We work closely and successfully with our community partners to be as efficient as possible. Thank you for your consideration of adding \$2 million to state aid to local public health units.

Please reach out to me any time if you have questions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.