

Dear Senator Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

I am eighteen years old and writing in support of House Bill 1114 to put a cap on the price of insulin in North Dakota.

When a person develops type 1 diabetes, as I did when I was eleven years old, their immune system attacks insulin producing cells in the pancreas. This makes that person's body unable to use glucose, which then builds up in the bloodstream. This will lead to death if they do not give themselves insulin, through injection or a pump, every day for the rest of their lives. I would have died if not for that first insulin shot in the emergency room seven years ago, and every day since.

For people with diabetes, our lives can quite literally be in the hands of the pharmacies where we get our insulin. There is no alternative medicine or treatment and no way to have prevented this disease. We should not be at the mercy of companies that set their prices enormously high, knowing we will pay it because we have no other choice.

I am lucky and my parents' insurance makes the cost of insulin manageable for our family, but recently a friend at school shared something that reminded me, again, that this isn't the case for everyone. Her uncle recently passed away from diabetic ketoacidosis. Why? Because he had type 1 diabetes and could no longer afford insulin. He rationed what he had for as long as he could, but in the end, it wasn't enough. His story is not unique. It could happen to any person with type 1 diabetes, myself included. It will continue to happen until a cap is put on the price of insulin. By supporting House Bill 1114, you will be protecting my future and that of many others with diabetes throughout North Dakota.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope you will consider what I and many others have to say in support of this bill. Please follow up if you have any questions, and thank you for your attention to the issue of affordable insulin.

Sincerely,
Della Phillips