



January 26, 2025

RE: Testimony to House Human Services Committee – HB 1612

Chair Ruby and Members of the Committee,

As Chairman of the North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA), and member of the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 1612, which proposes the establishment of the North Dakota Center for Aerospace Medicine at the University of North Dakota (UND).

Aerospace medicine is a cornerstone of the aviation industry, safeguarding the health and performance of pilots, flight students, and aviation personnel who are vital to the success of our state's aviation sector.

UND Health at the University of North Dakota already performs nearly 1,000 aviation medical certification exams annually—our region's highest volume of such exams. This impressive figure underscores the University of North Dakota's established expertise and dedication to ensuring the safety and well-being of aviation professionals.

Moreover, the University of North Dakota is recognized globally as a world-class aviation training institution, attracting students and professionals from around the world. By leveraging this renowned reputation and deep well of expertise, House Bill 1612 would allow the University of North Dakota to further serve our state, our region, and the aviation industry as a whole by creating a Center for Aerospace Medicine.

This initiative will enhance access to critical aviation health services and solidify North Dakota's leadership in advancing aerospace medicine and supporting the aviation workforce.

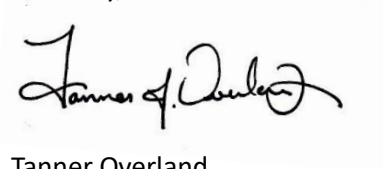
To make this vision a reality, we urge the committee to support House Bill 1612, as it will:

- Provide much-needed support to ease the complicated and time-consuming special issuance medical certification process currently experienced in our region.
- Play a pivotal role in providing support, enhancing career development, and promoting safer skies for all pilots and aviation professionals by ensuring reliable access to medical certification to stay compliant with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.
- Improve access to specialized aviation medical services, including access to Aviation Medical Examiners (AMEs) and Human Intervention Motivational Study (HIMS) certified examiners, by enabling physicians to travel to underserved communities, thus ensuring our state's rural aviators receive the medical services they need to continue safely flying.
- Create a platform for aerospace and space medicine research, helping North Dakota emerge as a national leader in this field.

- Provide medical and educational support needed to meet the demands of professionals in commercial aviation, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), and air traffic control.
- Serve as an educational resource for flight students, aviation workers, and the public.

Chair Ruby and Members of the Committee, the establishment of the North Dakota Center for Aerospace Medicine represents a transformative opportunity for our state to address critical needs in aviation health, support the well-being of aviation professionals, and reinforce North Dakota's position as a leader in aerospace innovation. House Bill 1612 will empower the University of North Dakota to expand its exceptional track record in education and aviation medicine while providing vital resources to underserved communities and enhancing the safety and efficiency of the aviation industry. We respectfully urge your committee's support of House Bill 1612, as it is not only an investment in the future of aviation but also in the economic vitality and global recognition of North Dakota.

Sincerely,



Tanner Overland

Chairman

North Dakota Aviation Association

