

Professional Fire Fighters of North Dakota

Darren Schimke, President | 218-779-4122 | dschimke@wiktel.com

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House Judiciary Committee

Re: Support of HB 1528

Chairman Klemin and members of the House Judiciary Committee.

My name is Darren Schimke, President of the Professional Fire Fighters of North Dakota representing 420 professional firefighters from North Dakota. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1528.

The language within HB 1528 addresses shortcomings that are being experienced under the current law. Some examples are, if someone is under the influence and starts a fire, they cannot be charged unless someone is injured or deceased. If someone starts their own property on fire, it is a civil matter because destroying your own property is not illegal. This becomes more common when couples are separating or the property is going through foreclosure.

Firefighters put their life on the line during each and every fire emergency. From the time they are dispatched, while responding to the scene, while on the fire ground rescuing trapped victims and extinguishing the flames, and even while retuning to the station. These arson fires needlessly add to the danger of the job. With your help, we can reduce these types of fires with HB 1528.

The PFFND respectfully request a Do Pass of HB 1528.

Darren Schimke