

January 29, 2024
House Judiciary Committee
HB 1558
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin, Chair

For the record, I am Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota in support of HB 1558. I am also the deputy director and attorney for the North Dakota League of Cities.

HB 1558 creates a remedy to try to make sure a child is financially supported when his or her parent is killed by an impaired driver. According to the North Dakota Crash Summary, published in 2023, 191 people have died in alcohol-related car crashes in the last 5 years in North Dakota. The Summary also provides that one alcohol-related crash occurs every 13 hours and that every 10 days an alcohol-related vehicle fatality occurs in North Dakota.

Law enforcement deals with alcohol-related driving offenses way too often and unfortunately, sometimes, those incidents involve car crashes and deaths. HB 1558 would create a remedy within the criminal court proceeding for a child victim to get financial support from the individual who killed his or her parents.

HB 1558 is a good bill that protects children whose parents are killed by impaired drivers. The Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota respectfully requests a Do Pass recommendation on HB 1558.