

Testimony
HB1012
House Appropriations-Human Resources Division
Cavalier County Health District
March 13, 2025

Chairperson Dever and members of the Senate Appropriations Human Resources Division,
My name is Stephanie Welsh. I am the Administrator/Director of Nurses for Cavalier County Health District serving the citizens of Cavalier County including the cities of Langdon, Munich, Osnabrock, Milton, Sarles, Nekoma, Wales, Hannah, and Alsen.

I have worked as a public health nurse for over 17 years. In my time in public health I have come to appreciate how important state aide funding is to meet the local needs of the rural communities I serve.

Public health is in a unique position to recognize and meet the needs specific to the places and people they serve. My agency's funding is a patchwork of grants, billed services, donations and state and local funding. While state aide funding is less than 3% of my agency's budget, the flexibility it provides to support public health efforts is valuable. It is common that the services individuals, communities and entities in my county need and request do not have dedicated funding support. State aid also helps my health unit to address things that communities need as they arise rather than waiting for problems to become large enough or be around long enough that funding support is dedicated to address these public health issues. In addition, state aide allows our health unit to address things that may remain specific to our county and never become a statewide or nationwide need.

State aide is an efficient, effective way to meet the local public health needs of the citizens of North Dakota. While the \$8,000,000 being considered as state aide funding is valued and appreciated it reflects a small percentage of funding to local health units. I would urge consideration to increase this amount in \$10,000,000 to better serve the unique and specific public health needs of North Dakota citizens for the 2025-2027 biennium.