



BOTTINEAU COUNTY | 701.228.3101
BURKE COUNTY | 701.377.2316
MCHENRY COUNTY | 701.537.5732

MCLEAN COUNTY (GARRISON) | 701.463.2641
MCLEAN COUNTY (WASHBURN) | 701.462.3330
RENVILLE COUNTY | 701.756.6383

SHERIDAN COUNTY | 701.363.2506
WARD COUNTY (KENMARE) | 701.385.4328
WARD COUNTY (MINOT) | 701.852.1376

Testimony HB 1012

Senate Appropriations Human- Human Resources Division
March 17, 2025

Chairman Dever and members of the committee.

I am Holly Brekhus, Executive Director at First District Health Unit (FDHU). First District Health Unit provides public health services in seven counties including Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, McLean, Renville, Sheridan and Ward. Our mission is to make a positive impact on the health and welfare of the community through service, education, prevention, and collaborative activities.

While we are grateful for the current funding, I would like to advocate for an additional \$2 million, for a total of \$10 million, for local public health to continue meeting the needs in our communities. Our budget is made up of various funding sources including mill levies, consumer fees, state and federal grants, community grants, and state aid. In 2024, our state aid made up about 6% of our budget. While not a significant portion, it is a vital portion because it allows for flexibility when addressing community needs. Not all community needs have funding streams available to address those needs. A lot of our funding is program or disease specific with a narrow focus and doesn't allow us to adapt to ongoing infrastructure needs and specific community needs.

In 2022 we purchased a mobile medical unit that allows us to go out into our communities and provide our constituents increased access to services. In 2024, our mobile unit was out in our communities 47 days that year. Some of the services we can provide offsite include worksite and school immunization clinics, women's health services, STI testing, adult vision screenings, blood pressure screenings, general wellness information, and referrals to other organizations or providers.

We also support children and maternal health programs such as High Priority Infants and Optimal Pregnancy Outcome Program. It supports our injury prevention program that distributes car seats and conducts carseat checks. It supports school nursing with things like vision screening, educational information on topics like nutrition, distracted driving, and online safety.

Our local community needs continue to grow and become more complex, and increases in state aid funding is needed to ensure a strong local public health system. Thank you for your time.

Holly Brekhus, Executive Director
First District Health Unit