

January 15, 2025

ND Senate Education Committee

Chairman Beard and Committee Members,

My name is Tim Mathern, Senator from District 11. I served on your committee for about a decade starting in 1987. Your agenda appears to be tougher these days! I bring SB 2099 before you at the request of student athletes and more specifically Jacob Willes also a student. He is the primary author of this legislation.

### **Overview of SB 2099**

This bill proposes a new section in chapter 15.1-18.2 of the North Dakota Century Code to establish cardiac arrest prevention and education requirements for student-athletes and their coaches. It requires the development of educational materials about cardiac arrest symptoms and risks that student-athletes and their parents must review before participation in any athletic activity. The bill requires coaches to complete cardiac arrest training, including CPR and AED education, and to hold informational meetings on cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs before each athletic season. The bill authorizes coaches to remove students from athletic activities if cardiac arrest symptoms are observed.

### **Why is this bill needed**

Every three days, a student athlete dies due to Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), making it the number one cause of death for student-athletes. Despite SCA being the leading threat to young athletes for decades, many people remain unaware of its signs, symptoms, and the immediate actions needed to save a life during a cardiac emergency. Symptom recognition and rapid response are critical for preventing deaths. We need to protect students by increasing awareness among athletes, parents, and coaches and implement protocols for recognizing and responding to SCA symptoms.

Please give time to Jacob to learn more about cardiac arrest, about organizations involved to save lives, and to address questions you might have.

I ask you for a Do Pass recommendation on SB2099.

Thank you.