

Dear Chair Barta and Members of the Industry and Business Committee,

I am writing to strongly urge you to vote yes on SB 2200.

As a Vietnam veteran, a rural North Dakota farmer, a father of four, and a grandfather of seven, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating toll that mental health struggles and substance use challenges can take on individuals, families, and entire communities. I have seen people in my community grapple with suicidal thoughts, and tragically, I have known those who lost their battle with despair.

The need for accessible, timely support for those in crisis cannot be overstated. This is why our state must continue to support and strengthen resources like **FirstLink**, which answers the **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** and the **211 Information and Referral Helpline**. These critical services provide a lifeline to individuals in their darkest moments and help connect them to the support they need.

Please, as someone who cares deeply about our state and the people in it, I urge you to support SB 2200. Together, we can make a meaningful difference for those who are struggling and bring hope to those who need it most.

Sincerely,

Daniel Lade