

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

I strongly support Senate Bill 2200 (SB 2200). As a community member, I urge you to vote in favor of this critical legislation to protect our communities.

Gun violence is a public health crisis, taking over 40,000 lives annually nationwide. **In North Dakota, an average of 90% of gun deaths are suicides, with 73 people losing their lives to firearm suicide each year.** These statistics underscore the urgent need for action. SB 2200 takes an important step by securing funding for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Helpline, providing vital support for individuals in distress, particularly in rural areas with limited mental health services.

To prevent suicide in North Dakota, we need safe storage laws to reduce access to unsecured firearms, background checks to ensure responsible ownership, and 24/7 crisis support to provide immediate assistance to those in need.

SB 2200 is about safeguarding our children, families, and communities, not politics.

Please support SB 2200 to create a safer future for all North Dakotans.

Thank you for your consideration. I'd be happy to provide additional information or discuss my support further.

Sincerely,

Jackie Beller – Fargo Resident and First Link Supporter