

**Testimony
Judiciary Committee
Representative Chris Griffin, Chairman
September 8, 2010**

Chairman Griffin and members of the Judiciary Committee my name is Don Wright. I am the Assistant Director of the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse of the North Dakota Department of Human Services. I am here today to provide information, as requested, pertaining to the treatment of problem gambling in North Dakota.

I will offer brief testimony in regard to overall budget and budget expenditures. Lisa Vig of Gamblers Choice, a program of Lutheran Social Services, will provide information specific to the treatment process, numbers of clients served, as well as trends.

The Department of Human Services was appropriated \$650,000 for the 2009-11 biennium for the treatment of problem gambling. The Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse manages this appropriation.

The \$650,000 appropriation consists of \$400,000 from the North Dakota Lottery and \$250,000 from general funds.

The Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse utilizes the funds to contract with Gamblers Choice to provide treatment to problem gamblers. In addition, a media campaign to raise awareness of problem gambling and the resources available to the problem gambler and family is ongoing. Funds are also used to support 211 as a point of contact and referral for individuals seeking assistance and information regarding problem gambling. A small amount of funding is used for the purchase of resource material to be

housed and distributed through the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse's Prevention Resource and Media Center.

This concludes my testimony regarding problem gambling treatment budget and expenditures.

I would be happy to answer questions you may have.