



**Testimony Provided to the
Interim Education Funding & Taxation Committee**

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Madam chair and members of the committee, for the record, I am Debra Anderson, deputy director of the North Dakota Medical Association.

NDMA appreciates the opportunity to be part of this important discussion on the diagnosis and treatment of concussions. Our association has not taken an official position on this issue beyond the support we voiced for SB 2281 during the 2011 Legislative Session. Both the AMA House of Delegates and the American Academy of Neurology have adopted similar policy statements.

Each of the speakers here today is committed to the health and wellbeing of our student athletes. We also agree it would not be practicable to establish a state law requiring physicians to diagnose concussions when they may not be available to do so in the more rural areas of our state. The committee should, however, carefully consider the issue of return to play and draw a distinction between those providers who are qualified to diagnose a concussion and those providers who are trained in the treatment of concussions.

As I mentioned, the NDMA Council has not amended its position on this issue since the 2011 Legislative Session, but we do believe it's important for the committee to consider the physician's perspective on return to play. We are fortunate to have with us today three area physicians, Dr. Tim Juelson, Dr. Jeremiah Penn and Dr. Dawn Mattern, who have significant experience in the diagnosis and treatment of concussions. We have reserved most of our agenda time so that you can hear what they have to say. So, unless you have questions for me, I'll turn the podium over to them.