

**Testimony
House Bill 1347
Senate Judiciary
Senator Larson, Chairman**

Chairman Larson, and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Pamela Sagness, Behavioral Health Executive Director with the Department of Health and Human Services. I am here in support of House Bill 1347.

Over the past year, the Department of Health and Human Services has partnered with the Courts and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to better support treatment courts in North Dakota. House Bill 1347 would clarify the roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved with treatment courts throughout North Dakota. Clarifying roles in statute would ensure that HHS can best perform our duty within the scope of the statute, mission, and policies of our agency.

The proposed language regarding the Department of Health and Human Services allows for oversight and flexibility in establishing behavioral health services in each region based on the court's needs and with consideration of regional differences. Currently, the treatment providers in each of these courts vary. For example, in some regions the services are provided by the public behavioral health clinic and in other regions it is provided by a private provider contracted with the state. Flexibility is necessary to ensure regional differences and resources are considered and treatment programs are adequate, available, and adhere to best practice standards.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to try to answer any questions. Thank you.