



Sheriff's Department



Robert Roed
Sheriff

March 24th, 2025

Chair Larson and members of the committee,

For the record my name is Robert Roed, I am the Sheriff of Ward County in Minot and I am providing testimony in support of HB 1418.

Specifically, I support the creation of subdivision I, which creates what we call a misdemeanor exemption for harassing a 911 emergency line, public safety answering point or an emergency responder communication system. Under North Dakota Century Code, in order for law enforcement to place someone under arrest for a misdemeanor, it must either occur in their presence or there must be an exemption. Since those harassing communications are currently a misdemeanor, it is necessary for a misdemeanor exemption to allow law enforcement to make a probable cause arrest without having to go through the process of obtaining an arrest warrant.

The challenge is that most dispatch centers do not have sworn law enforcement present. So, when a person decides to repetitively call 911 to simply curse and yell at the dispatcher, this creates a situation where it's in the best interest of society to have the person tying up that line to be quickly arrested so that the 911 call center can return to normal operations. Currently, unless there is a law enforcement officer present, an arrest warrant would need to be obtained, which could take hours or much longer depending upon the agency and availability of a prosecutor and judge.

Additionally, this misdemeanor exemption only applies to harassing a 911 emergency line, public safety answering point or an emergency responder communication system. It does not apply to the administrative line of a law enforcement agency. Federal law defines a public safety answering point and the FCC maintains a list of registered PSAPs. We commonly call these dispatch centers.

Sincerely,

Robert Roed, Sheriff
Ward County Sheriff's Department