



### TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION – HB 1613

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Terry Effertz, Executive Director of TechND, a statewide organization that champions the advancement of North Dakota's technology sector across all industries, including public safety.

While we understand and respect the intent of HB 1613 — to establish oversight of law enforcement's use of robotics and artificial intelligence — we believe the bill, as drafted, is overly broad and would have unintended consequences. The bill defines "robot" as "an artificial object or system that senses, processes, and acts using technology," including communication links and AI. Under this definition, a wide array of existing law enforcement tools could be subject to unnecessary regulation, including:

- Remote-controlled bomb disposal units
- Search-and-rescue drones flown by officers
- Sensor-enabled surveillance cameras
- Automated license plate readers
- Even body-worn cameras with basic motion sensing or tagging functions

These are standard tools used today — not autonomous robots making independent decisions or using force. Regulating them under the same framework as lethal or AI-driven autonomous systems is not practical and could slow or limit law enforcement's ability to adopt life-saving technologies. We urge the committee to consider a narrower, more precise definition of "robot," such as the following:

**"Robot" means a powered, artificial machine or system that, once activated, operates in whole or in part with autonomy to perform physical tasks or decision-making without real-time human control. The term includes systems capable of using force, surveillance, or mobility independent of direct human input.**

This definition clearly distinguishes between manually operated tools and autonomous systems. It would target the intended use cases — such as AI-enabled drones or lethal autonomous robots — without burdening widely used and officer-controlled equipment.

TechND supports thoughtful oversight, but regulation must be clear, targeted, and aligned with practical realities. We respectfully request the committee consider amending HB 1613 to reflect a more workable and precise framework. Thank you for your time and consideration.