

Testimony
House Concurrent Resolution 3046 - Department of Human Services
House Human Services Committee
Representative Price, Chairman
February 12, 2007

Chairman Price and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Don Wright, Assistant Director of the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services with the North Dakota Department of Human Services. I am here today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 3046.

The Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services coordinates with other State and local agencies through three Federal grants:

- The Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant requires 20% of the grant award to be spent for the funding of prevention activities. This funding supports eight regional and four tribal prevention coordinators. They work closely with the North Dakota Department of Transportation's Safe Communities Coordinators and the North Dakota Department of Health's District Health Tobacco Coordinators to streamline prevention services across the State. Funding is also provided for the statewide Prevention Resource Center, which maintains a large library of written and video materials including topics in substance abuse treatment and prevention. Items are loaned to any citizen of North Dakota free of charge.

- The Governor's portion of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Grant provides communities with funding to implement substance abuse prevention programs, policies, and strategies. This complements the school funding monitored by the Department of Public Instruction. The Division partners with the Departments of Public Instruction, Health, and Transportation to review grant applications submitted by communities for model program implementation. The Division also works with the

Department of Public Instruction to obtain a listing of school and communities prevention programs in operation across the State.

- The Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws grant is used by the North Dakota Highway Patrol to provide state and local law enforcement with overtime hours to focus efforts on party patrols and off-sale activities focused towards minors. The Office of the First Lady also uses funding from this grant to provide statewide media campaigns concerning such issues as parent-child communication about alcohol use. Finally, funds are used by the North Dakota Supreme Court to provide juvenile drug courts in Bismarck, Fargo and Grand Forks.

In addition to these cooperative efforts, the Department is involved with the Prevention Advisory Council. This group is in the process of enhancing communication among State entities that are providing substance abuse prevention services throughout the State. An Interagency Substance Abuse Prevention Team made up of these entities will be meeting to discuss research findings, training needs, state planning, program implementation and services evaluation.

In closing, the Department of Human Services is committed to the physical and emotional health of children and families. Collaborative efforts between public and private entities are critical to the promotion, education and awareness of healthy choices and the impact on educational success. This study will allow for the opportunity to identify new and creative ways to inform and promote healthy lifestyle choices for children and families in North Dakota.

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