

TESTIMONY OF

**Lieutenant Adam Dvorak**

Good morning, Chair Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Adam Dvorak, and I am the Assistant Operations Commander with the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I have been employed by the North Dakota Highway Patrol for approximately 21 years. For all but two of those years, I have been involved with the patrol's canine program in some capacity. I was a canine handler for eleven years and was assigned to a narcotics detecting canine and later a man-trailing bloodhound. I am here to testify on behalf of the North Dakota Highway Patrol, in support of House Bill 1388.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol has had a canine program for approximately thirty years. Since 1992, our agency has had thirty-five police canines who wore the badge and served the citizens of our state. Sadly, due to the relatively short lifespan of dogs, there are only three living, retired NDHP canines.

When our canines retire, they are most often adopted by the troopers who partnered with them. As many of you know, those animals come with a financial burden. House Bill 1388 proposes up to one-thousand dollars in reimbursement per year for retired police canines. This money is meant to help with medical bills and to help lessen the financial burden experienced by families who continue to care for these dogs in the dog's retirement years. Police canines spend the majority of their life training and serving our citizens to help keep North Dakota safe and secure.

Here are some facts regarding the NDHP Canine Program:

- K9 program in place since 1992
- 35 dogs have served as NDHP K9s
- 9 dogs (2 mantrailing and 7 narcotic-detecting) are currently serving the NDHP
- 3 living, retired dogs are eligible for benefits provided by HB1388
- Average years of service for NDHP K9s is 6 years
- Average lifespan of a NDHP K9 is 11 years
- Average age of NDHP K9 when acquired is 2 years old
- Average length of retirement is 3 years

Thank you for listening to my testimony, I would be happy to answer any questions.