

Testimony
Senate Bill 2236
Senate Human Services Committee
February 11, 2015; 10:30 a.m.
North Dakota Department of Health

Good morning Chairman Lee and members of the House Human Services Committee. My name is Kirby Kruger, Medical Services Section Chief for the North Dakota Department of Health (Department). I am here today to offer two amendments to Senate Bill 2236. The Department has two primary concerns with this bill. The first is the effect it may have on the forensic examiner's office, and the second is the effect it may have on the administration of emergency medical services.

With regard to forensics, the Department's Forensic Examiner's Office conducts forensic autopsies and contracts with the University of North Dakota's School of Medicine to conduct autopsies for a number of eastern counties. Autopsies frequently require x-rays. Because forensic work is done post-mortem, patient safety is not at issue. The Department's concern is that this bill may require the Department and UND to hire certified personnel or obtain certification for current staff in order to perform x-ray imaging for post-mortem exams.

With regard to emergency medical services, the Department certifies and licenses emergency medical service providers, such as emergency medical technicians and paramedics. Several procedures within the nationally-recognized scope of skills of emergency medical service providers may fit within the definition of "medical image" contained in this bill. These procedures include, but are not limited to, capnography and electrocardiograms. Additionally, portable sonography services may become part of some emergency medical services systems. We believe imposition of regulatory requirements for emergency medical service providers is duplicative, since the Department is already charged with that responsibility for emergency medical service providers in NDCC 23-27-04.3.

The Department is fully supportive of an amendment that would add a seventh and an eighth exemption to Section 3 that states:

7. Medical imaging performed as part of a post-mortem examination or on other nonliving remains.
8. Medical imaging performed by emergency medical services personnel certified or licensed as provided for in NDCC 23-27-04.3.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.