

Testimony
Senate Bill 2126
Senate Appropriations Committee
January 16, 2015, 8:00 a.m.
North Dakota Department of Health

Good morning Chairman Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee. My name is David Glatt, the Environmental Health Section Chief for the North Dakota Department of Health (Department). The Environmental Health Section is responsible for the implementation of a majority of the environmental protection programs in the state. I am here today to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 2126.

Senate Bill 2126 would provide funding to the Department to begin the hiring process for up to 14 environmental scientists before the end of the biennium. As noted in my opening statement, the Department implements the majority of environmental protection programs in the state. Each of these programs have experienced exponential increases in workload due to oil development and associated industrial and population growth in North Dakota. To illustrate the impact oil development has on every North Dakota Department of Health environmental protection program, I have provided you a document entitled *Oilfield Impacts and the North Dakota Department of Health, Environmental Health Section*.

Feel free to review the document at your leisure, but please note that the data depicted in various figures shows dramatic increases in all areas, most notably in the number of regulated facilities and new construction.

The Environmental Health Section is in critical need of additional staff to begin to address the increased workload. New staff, once trained, will be used in the areas of:

- > Facility compliance inspections
- > Enforcement
- > Permit/plan review and processing
- > Spill response
- > Environmental quality assessment/monitoring

SB 2126 will enable the Department to begin the process of selecting and hiring qualified individuals to assist in addressing the additional workload. It is important to note that we do not anticipate any substantial reduction in workload .in the near future. The need for additional staff is immediate and continues on into the future.

We believe SB 2126 will allow the Department to address this need as soon as possible.

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