

HOUSE BILL NO. 1387

Introduced by

Representatives Roers Jones, Guggisberg, Heinert, Kading

Senators Armstrong, Poolman

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact section 31-04-04.2 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to use of closed-circuit television of a minor or disabled adult witness.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1.** Section 31-04-04.2 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted
5 as follows:

6 **31-04-04.2. Use of closed-circuit television for minors or disabled adult witnesses.**

7 1. At the time of trial, if the witness is a minor or is a disabled adult as defined in section
8 12.1-31-07, the court may order the witness's testimony be taken in a room other than
9 the courtroom and be televised by closed-circuit television in the courtroom if:

- 10 a. The testimony is taken during the proceeding;
11 b. The judge determines the testimony of the witness in the courtroom would result
12 in the witness suffering serious emotional distress or trauma that would impact
13 the ability of the witness to reasonably communicate; and
14 c. Closed-circuit television equipment is available.

15 2. To obtain an order authorizing the use of closed-circuit television for testimony by a
16 minor or disabled adult witness, the party shall file a written motion with the court no
17 later than fourteen days before the trial.

18 3. Only the prosecuting attorney, attorney for the defendant, guardian ad litem, and the
19 judge may question the minor or disabled adult witness.

20 4. The following individuals may be in the room with the witness when the minor or
21 disabled adult provides testimony:

- 22 a. The prosecuting attorney;
23 b. The guardian ad litem;
24 c. The judge while administering the oath;

- 1 d. The operators of the closed-circuit television equipment; and
2 e. By order of the court, an individual whose presence contributes to the welfare
3 and well-being of the witness, including an individual who has dealt with the
4 witness in a therapeutic setting.
- 5 5. The judge and defendant must be allowed to communicate with the individuals in the
6 room where the witness is testifying through a electronic means or by meeting outside
7 the presence of the witness.
- 8 6. The provisions of this section do not apply if the defendant is pro se.
- 9 7. This section does not preclude the presence of both the witness and the defendant in
10 the courtroom at the same time for purposes of identifying the defendant.