

Good morning Senator Lee and members of the committee. I am Tim Wiedrich, Chief of the Health Resources and Response Section of the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH). I am here to provide information about SB 2212.

If passed, this bill would require the NDDoH to establish a pharmaceutical wholesaler and distribution system that procures, acquires, stores and distributes Canadian pharmaceuticals to North Dakota pharmaceutical providers. The bill also indicates that a contract can be established between the NDDoH and an existing North Dakota licensed pharmaceutical wholesaler.

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, public health and medical emergency preparedness and response programs were established to respond to terrorist attacks and other emergencies. These programs were largely funded and lead by the federal government. As part of that process, the NDDoH established and continues to operate a pharmaceutical distribution program.

The NDDoH holds the required wholesaler license from the North Dakota Board of Pharmacy as well as required Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration. We have processes for acquiring, securing, tracking and storing pharmaceuticals. We have the necessary equipment for meeting pharmaceutical cold chain requirements and have systems in place for the continuous monitoring of humidity and temperature conditions. Our security is regularly checked by federal, state and local law enforcement officials. We maintain an online system for public health units and medical providers, including pharmacies, to order the drugs. We have processes in place to ship both small and large quantities of drugs using commercial carriers and our own drivers and trucks.

In addition to operating a warehouse, we contract with a North Dakota licensed pharmaceutical wholesaler to carry out parts of our program. This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.