

3/8/1 TESTIMONY SUPPORT TO KEEP BREATHEND FUNDED/AMEND SB2024

March 8, 2017

North Dakota House Appropriations Human Resources Division:

Theresa Will, RN/Administrator: City-County Health District, Valley City

Phone: 701-845-8518

Good morning, Chairman Pollert and members of the House Appropriations Human Resources Division:

My name is Theresa Will, I am the Director at City-County Health District, the Local Public Health Unit for Barnes County, located in Valley City. I am here to voice my support for keeping SB2024 funded. This bill supports the vote of the people and their decision to invest a small portion of tobacco settlement dollars for tobacco prevention - *not only for 7 years, but through its entirety*. With this program, we have made remarkable progress in decreasing the tobacco use rates. The partnership between public health and the Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy is helping North Dakotans live healthier lives – here are some of our successes:

- a local ordinance that protects our youth from the dangers of electronic cigarettes;
- smoke free parks;
- tobacco free County and City grounds and vehicles;
- model school policies in all schools within our county;
- and we assist apartment managers with the tools to help their buildings become smoke-free so all tenants can have healthier, smoke-free homes.

This local policy work could not be achieved without the local policy grant, and technical assistance from the Center, which has supported approximately 1.3 FTE in Barnes County over the past many years.

Before the vote of the people, before we had our comprehensive program, outcomes were limited.

Through the leadership of the Center and with a STRONG FOCUS ON POLICY, we now see consistent results across the state.

Now is not the time to move this program. The Center's expertise gives us the strong backbone to hold the line and keep policies strong so we continue to see youth tobacco use rates drop to the low single digits. Moving this program now is short sighted. It will have serious long-term consequence on our kids' health and health care costs will continue to be out of control. Keep the Center funded and let's end the tobacco epidemic.