ND Emergency Commission votes to accept federal funds for COVID-19 response

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BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Emergency Commission voted today to accept up to $6 million in federal funds to contain and mitigate the spread of the coronavirus disease, COVID-19.

Congress passed and President Trump signed legislation last week appropriating $8.3 billion for COVID-19 preparedness, prevention and treatment efforts. Of the total, $950 million will go to state and local public health efforts, and half of that amount must be allocated within 30 days.

The North Dakota Department of Health requested increased spending authority to accept up to $6 million in federal funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including:

- $700,000 to cover salaries and wages of those devoting time to the emergency;
- $3.2 million for personal protective equipment for the state's medical cache and other supplies;
- $200,000 for equipment to efficiently and effectively test samples submitted to the state lab; and
- $1.9 million to grant to partners including the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, North Dakota National Guard, local public health units and hospitals in their efforts to assist the Department of Health.

The amounts are estimates that will need to be submitted to the CDC within 45 days of the bill's passage last Friday. The CDC has indicated that states can anticipate receiving an amount equal to at least 90 percent of their Public Health Emergency Preparedness funds, which would ensure North Dakota receives $4.56 million at a minimum.

The Emergency Commission unanimously approved the request on a 6-0 vote.

Local public health units may direct questions about the federal funding to Tim Wiedrich, Emergency Preparedness Section Chief at the Department of Health, at (701) 328-2270 or twiedric@nd.gov.

The Emergency Commission consists of Gov. Doug Burgum as chairman, Secretary of State Al Jaeger, House Majority Leader Chet Pollert of Carrington, Senate Majority Leader Rich Wardner of Dickinson, House Appropriations Chairman Jeff Delzer of Underwood and Senate Appropriations Chairman Ray Holmberg of Grand Forks.

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