

Nowatzki, Mike to Mike

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State of  
**North Dakota**  
*Office of the Governor*

Doug Burgum  
*Governor*

**NEWS: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Burgum accepts Schuler's resignation, appoints Kessel as interim Department of Commerce commissioner**

BISMARCK, N.D. (Oct. 1, 2018) – Gov. Doug Burgum today accepted the resignation of state Commerce Commissioner Jay Schuler and appointed Deputy Commissioner Shawn Kessel to serve as interim commissioner until the position can be permanently filled.

"This afternoon Jay Schuler offered his resignation, which I accepted. Jay has apologized for sending to Commerce Department staff an email this morning that was unacceptable in official communications with team members," Burgum said. "We are grateful to Jay for the positive work he has done on behalf of Commerce, especially his work with the entrepreneur community, his hiring of key leaders and his important work with intermodal container transportation and intellectual property. The Commerce Department will continue to work to improve the quality of life and economic success for North Dakota citizens."

"It was an error in judgment for me to send out an email with my personal thoughts and opinions to our Commerce team, especially on such a sensitive topic. I did not mean to offend or create a difficult situation for anyone and I've expressed my sincere apologies to the team," Schuler said. "We have outstanding team members in Commerce who come to work every day with the intent of making the state better for North Dakota citizens, and I appreciate their hard work and commitment."

Kessel will assume his new role as interim commissioner immediately. He joined the Commerce Department in June as deputy commissioner, having previously served as Dickinson city administrator since 2009 and as Wahpeton city administrator for nine years before that.

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