

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4024

Introduced by

Senators Bakke, Heitkamp, Mathern

Representatives Delmore, Ekstrom, Wolf

1 A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Council to study universal health care for North
2 Dakotans, including consideration of how other states have addressed access to health care,
3 the costs and benefits associated with universal health care, and the impact of universal health
4 care on children, adults, and families.

5 **WHEREAS**, individuals who are medically uninsured or underinsured face a number of
6 obstacles to their financial and medical well-being, including higher out-of-pocket costs for care,
7 poorer health outcomes than their fully insured counterparts, and a greater likelihood that easily
8 treatable ailments will go untreated and become serious medical problems; and

9 **WHEREAS**, although most North Dakotans have some type of health insurance through
10 employer coverage, individual coverage, Medicaid, or Medicare, more than 71,400 North
11 Dakotans lack health insurance of any type; and

12 **WHEREAS**, costs of health care for the uninsured are shifted to hospitals through
13 increased emergency visits and uncompensated care and are shifted to insured North
14 Dakotans through increased premiums to cover medical costs of those lacking coverage for
15 cost-effective, preventive care; and

16 **WHEREAS**, even individuals with private health insurance coverage can be at risk of
17 having high out-of-pocket health care costs and understanding the degree to which rural and
18 urban residents of this state are underinsured has important implications for health policy and
19 practice; and

20 **WHEREAS**, other states have risen to meet the challenge of ensuring their residents
21 have health care coverage, including Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont; and

22 **WHEREAS**, states have always been policy innovators and laboratories of reform and
23 North Dakota can lead in taking efforts to increase access to, control costs of, and improve the
24 quality of health care provided to North Dakotans;

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE**
2 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:**

3 That the Legislative Council study universal health care for North Dakotans, including
4 consideration of how other states have addressed universal health care, the costs and benefits
5 associated with universal health care, and the impact of universal health care on children,
6 adults, and families; and

7 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Legislative Council report its findings and
8 recommendations, together with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to
9 the Sixty-first Legislative Assembly.