

Testimony in support of House Bill 1465 – Any Willing Provider

February 3, 2021

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

For the record my name is Dr. Steven Jared Broadway and I am a board-certified Neurosurgeon who founded Northern Neurosurgery and Spine in Fargo in January 2020. I graduated from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 2005, then went on to Neurosurgical residency at the University of Tennessee in Memphis which I completed in 2011. One of my coresidents decided to move to Duluth and recruited me to join the Duluth Clinic which, as you may know, was a physician led practice that was incorporated into Essentia Health just before I started my practice in 2011. I was the third neurosurgeon in the practice, but my senior partner retired about a year after my arrival. My friend and partner decided to leave Essentia in early 2014, leaving me as the sole neurosurgeon. It took me almost 2 years to recruit a partner, and when I resigned in November 2019, I had hired 3 neurosurgeons and had 6 NP and or PAs. Although I had a very robust practice and had sacrificed a lot for the betterment of the organization, I could never find a balance between patient care and administrative pressures. Through fate I was able to learn about the independent medical community in Fargo, and I saw a need and opportunity to establish an independent Neurosurgical Spine practice.

Access is key:

Starting my own practice has been a breath of fresh air and has allowed me to reflect on why I truly became a physician and surgeon. I have been able to provide robust access for patients with spinal pathology. Patients and referring providers have direct access to me and my clinic, which does not happen in large systems. This allows for timely consultation and surgical intervention which are paramount for good surgical outcomes.

Cost effective care and patient outcomes:

I am the only surgeon in the Fargo area performing spinal surgery in an ambulatory center. Healthcare is moving more and more toward the outpatient setting as surgical techniques and anesthesia delivery advance. Despite having performed over 3000 operations in the hospital setting in Duluth, I can say with absolute confidence that quality and outcomes are not sacrificed while delivering lower cost of care. This not only benefits the patient, but also the insurers and society as a whole. We have had absolutely no complaints, and many accolades. Patient experience results in better outcomes; all with decreased costs to our healthcare community. Not allowing patients to choose their provider based on their insurer contradicts our collective goal as a society to decrease healthcare spending.

Retention:

Though all of us involved in this discussion clearly have a commitment to our North Dakota communities, they are difficult to recruit new practitioners to. This results in a revolving door of providers, except in the independent community. Patients want to receive care at home but become disenfranchised when their provider leaves and/or they have to be referred out due to access constraints. This is an unfortunate reality, and I truly believe having a rich and robust network of independent practitioners allows for hospitals and healthcare systems to benefit by providing a choice

for patients and allowing them to be served within their community. In order to ensure viability of these practices, we must come together to support and pass house bill 1465.

Thank you, Chairman and committee, for your time and consideration.