

January 25, 2023

Re: Testimony in support of SB 2288

Dear Chairman Wobbema, Vice Chair, and members of the Workforce Development Committee,

I'm Dr. Beth Sanford, President-Elect of the North Dakota Nurses Association and a member of the Nursing Recruitment and Retention committee, comprised of members of other state nursing associations.

We are bringing forward this bill SB2288, regarding the funding of a Nursing-Only Challenge grant, as an immediate strategy to support the building of North Dakota's nursing workforce to meet staffing demands.

As you may be familiar, higher education challenge grants can support:

- Nursing Endowments and Scholarships, which support student decision-making to pursue nursing as a profession.
- Informatics infrastructure providing matching grants for high-dollar lab equipment for providers of nursing education.

This bill allows for a nursing-only challenge grant and amendment for a verbiage change for nursing to say, "providers of nursing education" to include additional providers of nursing education and future options for Career and Technical Education partnerships.

Some communities may choose to pursue an innovative program to offer Practice Nursing as part of a higher education/Career and Technical Education partnership program. Key stakeholders are looking at options that meet North Dakota Century Code requirements in building such partnerships, which would have to meet licensure requirements for both the Board of Nursing and secondary education.

Similar programs allow students to complete/begin a practical nursing degree (typically 1-2 years, in high school). Research shows such programs in other states, for LPN (WI, NY, LA) and EMT (Minnesota), retain talent in the local community.

The profession of nursing needs to do something drastic now to encourage North Dakota residents and residents of other states to enter the profession and choose to live and work in North Dakota.

Challenge grants have proven effective for North Dakota to build its workforce, a nursing-only challenge grant would allow providers of nursing education to expand to meet the needs of the workforce in 2023 in creative and innovative ways.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Can I answer any questions?

Beth Sanford, DNP, MSN, RN, ACN, CLC

President-Elect of the North Dakota Nurses Association