

HB 1452  
January 28, 2025

Dear North Dakota Legislators,

As a board-certified weight loss physician in North Dakota for the past 20 years, I have witnessed firsthand the challenge obesity poses for our state's residents. The addition of the GLP-1 class of medications over the past 5 years has revolutionized the management of weight loss. These injectable medications offer a highly effective, safe and generally well tolerated tool to combat weight related illnesses (sleep apnea, hypertension, arthritis, chemical dependency?). The high costs however make them inaccessible to many, leaving a gap in care for many who would benefit most.

Beyond weight loss, GLP-1 meds are/will contribute to the improvement in quality of life, mood, self confidence of fellow North Dakotans. Life expectancy and reduction of overall healthcare costs will also likely be a positive outcome. The widespread availability of these treatments through all insurance providers in the state would ensure fairer access.

My main frustration with this class to date been the cost. I would like the State of North Dakota to work with other state agencies to have companies justify the price US patients pay compared to other countries. If this bill is not passed, it is in state's best interest to assure the safety of compounded GLP products many are turning to.

I believe a lifetime cap on these medications and the need for patient accountability is reasonable. We find as patients meet their health/weight goals, these medications in many can be weaned (to every two to three weeks for example). If one's goal weight is achieved and maintained with these medications for between 12-18 months, they often can be safely stopped/weaned/dose decrease and eventually changed to other cheaper maintenance therapies.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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