

Testimony on HB 1142

House Appropriations Human Resource Division - Chairman, Nelson Monday, February 8, 2021

Good morning Mister Chairman, and members of the committee, my name is Trina Taszarek-Schilling, and I am here to testify in favor of House Bill 1142. I apologize for not being able to meet with you in person, however, I was on call this past weekend for our rural critical access hospital until this morning.

On behalf of myself, I am testifying in support of the North Dakota Area Health Education Center (NDAHEC) Program, the Eastern and Western North Dakota Area Health Education Centers (Eastern ND AHEC, Western ND AHEC). The ND AHEC/Eastern/Western ND AHEC focuses on providing support across the health care workforce pipeline to address health care workforce shortages through distribution, diversity, supply, and quality health care professionals.

I recently graduated from the Doctor of Nursing program of the University of Mary, Bismarck and have the honor of being the AHEC's programs first Scholar graduate. I am employed as a Family Nurse Practitioner for the South-Central Healthcare, Wishek, and rotate through the rural health clinics located in Kulm, Napoleon, Gackle and Wishek. During my studies, AHEC assisted me in completing my pediatrics rotation in the rural healthcare setting of Sanford Health, Dickinson, as well as my emergency service rotation at the Williston Medical Center in the Williston. I live in Wishek, and for a period of three weeks I traveled to Dickinson (400 miles round trip) for my pediatric rotation and for a period of 4 weeks I traveled to Williston (700 miles round trip). During each rotation, I stayed a period of four days each week to complete my clinical rotations. I was able to collaborate with ND AHEC to offset some of the endured mileage expenses through grant opportunities offered to those students who complete clinical hours at a rural health setting. This was extremely helpful, as in this rigorous program your time and dedication is to your studies and not the ability to work or work additional hours to offset non-covered or unanticipated expenses by one's financial aid throughout the educational track of program completion.

In closing, I would like to say that I, personally, am pleased to continue a relationship that was not only beneficial to me, but also to other future rural health students/providers and the North Dakota Area Health Education Program and the Eastern/Western North Dakota Area Health Education Centers. As a Doctor of Nursing, FNP, with a passion to serve rural North Dakota, I believe this support is worthy and meets the needs of future health care students, professional providers, rural communities, and assurance of access for quality health care services in our great State of North Dakota. Thank you.

I urge a "Do Pass" for House Bill 1142.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Trina Taszarek-Schilling, APRN, FNP-BC, MMGT, MBA