



2021 HCR 3015
House Human Services Committee
Representative Robin Weisz, Chairman
February 10, 2021

Chairman Weisz and Members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Melissa Hauer, General Counsel, North Dakota Hospital Association. I am here to testify in support of 2021 House Concurrent Resolution 3015 and ask that you give it a **Do Pass** recommendation.

We support the concurrent resolution's suggestion for a study of implementing a community health worker program. There are several types of community health worker (CHW) program models. These models vary based on the services provided, the patients and community members they serve, and the goals of the health program. Generally speaking, these workers are lay members of communities who work either for pay or as volunteers in association with the local health care system in both urban and rural environments and usually share ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, and life experiences with the community members they serve. This enables the worker to serve as a liaison between health and social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery which helps reduce health disparities in underserved communities.

CHW services can improve access to health care services, increase health screenings, enhance communication between community members and health providers, increase appropriate use of health care services, improve adherence to health recommendations and reduce the need for emergency and specialty services.¹ We support a study to identify the most promising model for a North Dakota CHW program and strategies for adapting the model to meet our community needs.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions. (2007). [*Community Health Worker National Workforce Study*](#).

We ask that you give this concurrent resolution a **Do Pass** recommendation.

I would be happy to try to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Hauer, General Counsel/VP
North Dakota Hospital Association