

February 10, 2021

HCR 3022-Neutral Testimony

Good Afternoon Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shila Blend and I am the Director of the North Dakota Health Information Network, our statewide Health Information Exchange. I am here at a neutral stance to provide information as you consider HCR 3022, a resolution directing the Legislative Management to consider studying the feasibility and desirability of implementing a hospital discharge database.

North Dakota Health Information Network (NDHIN) is a statewide interoperable health information exchange (HIE) connecting diverse providers, hospitals, clinics, and labs to make electronic health information available on demand at the point of care. Our participants include all acute care hospitals, Critical Access Hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), rural clinics, 75% of North Dakota's local public health units, as well as some long-term care facilities, pharmacies, chiropractors, and other ancillary providers.

Information in the HIE is dependent upon the data feeds a hospital chooses to share. NDHIN already collaborates with NDDoH to support electronic access to newborn screening results, lab results, syndromic surveillance, and several registries including immunizations and autism. I provide this information to you today to provide awareness that discharge data is currently collected in our statewide health information exchange. Although, we do not yet have a database to deidentify and process the information into. Viewing NDHIN as a health data utility holds out the promise to make HIE services more valuable by further broadening participation, lowering cost barriers to providers, enhancing analytics capabilities, and improving health care and care coordination for North Dakotans. If you pass this resolution, I encourage you to involve our health information exchange in the study.

Thank you for your time.