

HB 1478
Senate Education Committee
Sen. Schaible, Chair
March 9, 2021

Chairman Schaible and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Brittany Sachdeva and I am Vice President of Operations for Sanford Health in Fargo. I am writing in support of HB 1478, an exciting opportunity to build North Dakota workforce by allowing high school students to earn academic credit for experiences outside the classroom. Healthcare, like many other industries in North Dakota, faces a growing challenge when it comes to workforce. In addition to a chronic nursing shortage – North Dakota has nearly 1,000 unfilled nursing positions – North Dakota hospital systems need lab techs, rad techs, pharmacists, engineers, nursing assistants, nutrition services workers, and many more positions.

HB 1478 creates a meaningful pathway to connect with students and help them imagine what a career in healthcare might look like. We envision programs that would invite students to observe a variety of healthcare professions to get a better idea of what career areas they may want to pursue. Another option would be to create a certified nursing assistant internship that would allow students to become CNAs and actually get paid for some of the learning experiences gleaned in the program. CNA experience is a beneficial building block for a variety of medical careers including nursing, therapies and medical services.

The opportunity to build upon traditional education with hands-on and practical learning is giant step in the right direction to help address North Dakota's workforce shortages. We welcome the opportunity to partner with school districts to provide valuable learning experiences designed to help students get a jump start on their futures while helping to build North Dakota workforce.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have questions or would like additional information.

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