

House Bill 1151 – In Opposition
 Human Services Committee
 67th Legislative Assembly of North Dakota

March 2, 2021

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee Members:

Align Technology is a global medical device company that designs, manufactures and markets the Invisalign® system, the most advanced clear aligner system in the world; iTero® intra-oral scanners and services for orthodontic, preventative and restorative dentistry; and a comprehensive suite of software designed to link elements of the digital dental ecosystem into a data-driven network of comprehensive oral care. Align employs more than 19,000 employees in four regions and multiple locations around the world.

Align revolutionized orthodontic treatment with the introduction of Invisalign clear aligners over 20 years ago and today continues to drive technology forward to help providers transform the patient experience and improve outcomes while revolutionizing the practice of dentistry. Since 2011, over 100 Invisalign trained dentists have treated **over 7,000 North Dakota patients** with Invisalign® clear aligner therapy.

With recent innovations in medical and dental technology, and particularly in light of the challenges presented by the pandemic, the interest in and use of teledentistry has grown. Align believes that, in certain contexts, **teledentistry is a valuable tool** for dentists but it does not replace the need for a responsible professional. House Bill 1151 should be amended to make sure that all who receive care through teledentistry have access to a licensed, responsible, dentist **who knows them personally as a patient before treatment begins**.

Clear aligners are *not* “mouth guards” or retainers

Any clear aligner therapy, like treatment with traditional “brackets and wire” braces, move teeth through bone. Clear aligners are not mouth guards that protect teeth or retainers which seek to hold teeth in position.

Dental examinations are necessary *prior* to treatment

Prior to the start of orthodontic treatment, a dentist should conduct an in-person, physical examination of the patient and, if indicated by that examination, review or order radiographs to confirm they are a good candidate for treatment. This should be required by law.

Teledentistry *enhances* dentistry

Teledentistry may be used as an adjunct to in-person visits to enhance patient education and increase patient and practice convenience. Not as a replacement

Clear aligner therapy constitutes the practice of *dentistry*

The Legislature should specifically direct the dental board to regulate orthodontic treatment utilizing clear aligner therapy as the practice of dentistry.