

David Schall MD

Valley Bone and Joint

Grand Forks, ND

SB 2334 – Extended Stay Centers

Dear members of the committee,

My name is David Schall MD from Grand Forks. I am currently a private practice Orthopedic Surgeon who has been practicing for over 18 years and I am currently operating and performing procedures at North Dakota Surgery Center in Grand Forks, an Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC)

I am in favor of this bill and I feel it will directly benefit the citizens of North Dakota, improve their healthcare delivery, and have an indirect benefit by overall lowering healthcare costs.

By the year 2030, it is projected that up to 75% of all total joint replacement performed in the US will be done as an outpatient (staying in the hospital or surgery center less than 24 hours).

I have been performing joint replacements at an ASC for over 2 years. All my patients who are having joint replacements at our ASC are carefully selected, evaluated medically by their primary provider and deemed fit to proceed with their surgery and be discharged within 24 hours. All higher risk patients or those who we do not feel safe going home within 24 hours are all still treated at an in-patient facility (hospital).

There are instances when minor problems occur (such as nausea or urinary retention) and they need to stay longer than 24 hours but less than 48 hours. This would allow us to have patients stay for short periods longer and avoid an unnecessary transfer to an in-patient hospital setting. It will directly benefit the citizens of North Dakota by allowing expanded healthcare options in settings than have been shown to have better patient outcomes, lower infection rates, and higher patient satisfaction, without compromising safety, than in-patient settings

In the current COVID pandemic, it allows a setting that minimizes patient and families risk to exposure and infection while offering improved access and flexibility with the changing dynamics brought on by the pandemic that larger settings cannot easily provide.

Ambulatory Surgery Centers/Extended Stay Centers markedly reduce the total cost of procedures which can significantly reduce the patients out of pocket costs in an age of high deductibles, as well as passing along significant savings to health insurance companies and workers comp.

In summary, I feel this bill will allow the modernization of health care delivery, especially in the uncertain times we are facing due to the pandemic. It will allow continued improved patient outcomes currently seen at ACS` s at a significant cost savings to the patient and health insurance providers without compromising patient safety.

