

# NDSU NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Good morning Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee.

My name is Charys Kunkel. I live in New Salem, ND and am the Director of NDSU Nursing at Sanford Health in Bismarck. I am also speaking on behalf of Carla Gross, Associate Dean for the NDSU School of Nursing in Fargo. We are testifying in support of Senate Bill 2288 which will award matching funds to nursing programs for projects that advance nursing education.

Nursing education serves as the pipeline in meeting nursing workforce needs. As you are all well aware there is a critical nursing shortage that is expected to escalate in the years to come. The fact that there is a critical shortage of nursing faculty who are aging and retiring escalates the critical nursing shortage. Nursing programs in North Dakota have expanded enrollments over the past ten years even though our budgets have not expanded to match. In addition, simulation costs have increased substantially over the past ten years. Simulation is used to supplement clinical experiences, offering students a safe place to practice nursing skills and exposure to common, complex, clinical experiences.

This bill will support nursing programs with funding to meet critical needs in nursing education or to expand programs. As a land grant university, NDSU is committed to working to meet the workforce needs of the state. Since 2015, NDSU has expanded the Pre-Licensure BSN program in Fargo doubling the number of students admitted. We have added a site in Bismarck in an effort to address the critical shortage of nurses in western North Dakota. NDSU also has RN to BSN and LPN to BSN tracks which are online programs designed to advance nursing knowledge and skills. Both of these online programs meet the needs of place bound students, often in rural or underserved communities. In addition, we have a Family Nurse Practitioner program that is offered in Fargo and Bismarck that aims to meet the need for primary care providers in our state. NDSU School of Nursing's mission is to improve the health of all people, including underserved, rural, and diverse populations. We are committed to continue exploring new programs that will meet the workforce needs of our state.

With all respect, we ask you to vote in favor of this bill. The funding will provide support to nursing programs across the state who are educating future nurses.

This concludes our testimony.

Sincerely,

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