

House Bill 1029
North Dakota House of Representatives
Human Services Committee
Rep. Gretchen Dobervich
January 9, 2023 2:pm

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Human Services Committee my name is Representative Gretchen Dobervich. I represent District 11 in South Central Fargo. I come before you with HB 1028, a bill passed out of the Legislative Interim Health Care Committee, related to the study of a community health workers program.

In front of you is a handout from the Michigan League of Public Policy that does a really nice job of describing who community health workers are, what they do, and how they can improve health outcomes and health care costs.

HB 1028 seeks to establish a task force of multisector stakeholders to develop a data driven, best practice plan for community health worker education, training, regulation, and ND Medicaid reimbursement, the building blocks of a state managed and funded community health worker program.

The taskforce membership would include, but not be limited to, the Department of Health and Human Services, North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education, Department of Public Instruction, State Board of Higher Education, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, North Dakota Center for Rural Health, North Dakota State University and University of North Dakota Departments of Public Health, private insurance providers, healthcare providers, including qualified service providers, and tribal nations placed in North Dakota. HB 1028 directs the task force to complete their work for the program to begin in 2025.

In addition to HB 1028, HB 1029 was passed out of the Legislative Interim Committee on Health Care to establish a community health worker program across North Dakota. During study testimony the interim, committee heard testimony from the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services and content experts that elements of both bills were needed to establish, fund, and implement a community health worker program. I would like to thank the members of the Interim Health Care Committee, retired Senator Howard Anderson, the author of HB 1029, and the stakeholders who worked to bring this bundle of bills.

There is a fiscal note of \$75,000 of one-time spending for the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services to contract with an independent facilitator to convene taskforce meetings, facilitate the meetings, collect secondary data as needed, and write and disperse minutes of the meetings.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Human Services Committee I recommend abstaining from action on HB 1028 until HB 1029 is heard, which is scheduled to be heard after this