

Testimony in support of House Bill 1416

February 6, 2023

Good morning, Chairman Weisz, Vice-Chairman Ruby and Members of the Committee:

For the record my name is Dr. Steven Jared Broadway and I am a board-certified Neurosurgeon who founded Northern Neurosurgery and Spine in Fargo in January 2020. I graduated from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 2005, then went on to Neurosurgical residency at the University of Tennessee in Memphis which I completed in 2011. I practiced in Duluth from 2011 until late 2019 when I left the employed model to start my independent practice in Fargo. I had the opportunity to testify in favor of House Bill 1465 during the last session and am happy to reiterate my support today for all patients' freedom of choice for health care services.

Access is key:

Starting my own practice has been a breath of fresh air and has allowed me to reflect on why I truly became a physician and surgeon. I have been able to provide robust access for patients with spinal pathology. Patients and referring providers have direct access to me and my clinic, which does not happen in large systems. This allows for timely consultation and surgical intervention which are paramount for good surgical outcomes.

Cost effective care and patient outcomes:

I am the only surgeon in the Fargo area performing spinal surgery in an ambulatory center. Healthcare is moving more and more toward the outpatient setting as surgical techniques and anesthesia delivery advance. Prior to Fargo, all of my surgical cases were performed in the hospital setting. Now with 3 years of experience performing ambulatory surgery, I can say with absolute confidence that quality and outcomes are excellent, and the cost of care is substantially lower. This not only benefits the patient, but also the insurers and society as a whole. Not allowing patients to choose their provider based on their insurance network contradicts our collective goal as a society to decrease healthcare spending.

Retention:

Everyone involved in this discussion clearly has a commitment to our beautiful North Dakota communities. It is a fact, however, that colder climates and smaller towns result in difficulties in the recruitment and retention of skilled providers. The independent medical community has a lot of "stake in the game" as concomitant small-business owners. Patients want to receive care at home but become disenfranchised when their provider leaves and/or they are referred out due to access or specialty constraints. This is an unfortunate reality, and I truly believe having a rich and robust network of independent practitioners allows for hospitals and healthcare systems to benefit by providing more choices for patients and allowing them to be served within their community. To ensure the viability and growth of these practices, we must come together to support and pass house bill 1416.

I encourage a DO PASS on HB1416

Thank you, Chairman and committee, for your time and consideration.

