

Pain Treatment Center Anesthesiologists

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Re: HB1416 (Patient Choice Bill)

Dear Chairman Weisz, Vice-Chairman Ruby, and members of the House Human Services Committee

The Pain Treatment Center Anesthesiologists (PTCA) strongly supports HB1416 which allows patients the choice of which facility and provider they would like to receive care. Currently there are some insurances that provide zero out of network options forcing patients to be seen at a specific facility and by specific providers. HB1416 provides the ability for patients to choose where and by whom to be seen.

PTCA is an independent interventional chronic pain treatment facility. We have been providing care to Bismarck and rural North Dakota for many years. Over this time it has been our goal to provide quality care that is easy and accessible. Accessibility and time to treatment are extremely important to an individual suffering in pain. By allowing zero out of network options, the patients who have these plans will see longer wait times, have more appointments, and be forced to travel further distances.

At other pain treatment centers in the area, an initial visit can take up to 3 months. At PTCA we are usually able to accommodate patient's initial visit within 2 weeks, thus decreasing the time to initial treatment. At other pain treatment centers in the area, 2 appointments are required. One appointment is for the evaluation and one is for the procedure. At PTCA we accommodate out of town individuals by scheduling the initial visit and tentative procedure on the same day, thus decreasing the number of appointments and distance traveled. By allowing zero out of pocket networks to exist, patients with these plans do not have the option to choose quicker and more convenient care.

HB1416 allows patients to have a choice. A choice for a trusted provider. A choice for quicker and convenient care. We are asking for a DO PASS recommendation in order to provide all individuals in the community this choice.

Sincerely,

Attas Boutros, MD

Hugh Carlson, MD

Dustin Goetz, MD