

Chairman Weisz and House Human Services Committee,

I am Cristine Deaver, and I practice as a special education program coordinator and a licensed and board certified behavior analyst in the public school system. I am currently the President of North Dakota Association for Behavior Analysis. I'm in favor of HB 1530 because it provides reimbursement for the Medicaid required parent/caregiver training, it will support services to continue past the age of 21 and it allows Medicaid coverage of behavioral assessment and intervention to individuals with a variety of psychological and medical diagnoses.

Currently, ND Medicaid requires caregiver training but does not provide reimbursement for this service. I am also in support of providing support of behavior analytic services past the age of 21 and to provide Medicaid coverage of behavioral assessment and intervention to individuals with a variety of psychological and medical diagnoses.

While North Dakota Medicaid currently reimburses applied behavior analysis as a service for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, I would like to kindly provide additional information on the use of applied behavior analysis to both assess and treat common behavioral problems across the lifespan for individuals with a variety of psychological and medical diagnoses.

Peer-reviewed research and case studies have demonstrated that the implementation of behavior analytic treatments have effectively treated symptoms related to a variety of developmental, dental, medical, psychological, and cognitive disorders for pediatric, adult, and geriatric populations. Limiting reimbursement to children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder may prevent necessary and effective treatment that address symptoms related to specific disorders from being used with other populations (individuals with other diagnoses). Several peer-reviewed journals have published demonstrations of effective treatments utilizing behavior analytic principles and techniques to treat a wide-variety of disorders over the lifespan. Such journals include: *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, *Behavior Modification*, *Behavioral Interventions*, *Analysis of Verbal Behavior*, *Autism*, *Autism Research*, *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, *Behavior Analysis: Research and Practice*, *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *Journal of Behavioral Education*, *Journal of Experimental Analysis of Behavior*, *Perspectives on Behavior Science*, *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, and *Clinical Case Studies*.

Applied Behavior Analysis as a treatment has been supported by several organizations that represent individuals across the lifespan for a variety of disorders including *Association of Behavior Analysis International*, *Association of Professional Behavior Analysis*, *American Academy of Pediatrics*, *American Psychological Association*, *National Education Association*, and *Center for Disease Control*.

I believe that if age and diagnostic restrictions are removed, more North Dakotans would have access to peer-reviewed and evidence-based practices to learn new skills and enrich the lives of those who receive the service or are currently on waiting lists for services provided by other professionals. Recognizing that behavior analysts can provide effective services may reduce the number of individuals who are experiencing behavior health problems and not currently receiving services do to wait lists. Expanding the populations that could receive ABA services could also increase the urgency of developing, creating, and maintaining necessary training programs for potential behavior technicians,

paraeducators, nursing and dental assistants, general and special educators, and behavior analysts. In doing so, more professionals would be trained in effective behavioral interventions and in turn, North Dakotans would be able to access better behavioral health care.

I politely request that the State acknowledges the scope of behavior analysis as acknowledged by leading national professional organizations and move toward including ABA services across the lifespan and across a variety of populations.

Sincerely,

Cristine Deaver