



**TESTIMONY on SB 2155**  
**from the**  
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS—NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER**  
**to the**  
**ND House Human Services Committee**  
**March 15, 2023**

**Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee:**

**The Advocacy Committee of the NASW-ND submits this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2155.** Additionally, we ask that you restore the original request of \$2 million. We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective.

**NASW-ND strongly supports SB 2155** for the following reasons:

1. The original bill would appropriate \$2 million to the department of health and human services to help offset costs of uncompensated care at health centers and to expand the number of community health centers in areas of the Dakotas with healthcare shortages.
2. Community health centers serve as vital access points for behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment for underserved communities. In 2021, health centers in ND provided more than 33,000 mental health visits and more than 8,000 substance use visits.
3. Health centers are addressing the social determinants of health – those social and economic barriers that prevent people from getting healthy and sustaining health over time. Within medical primary care visits, health centers routinely identify needs such as food, housing, transportation, and others, and connect patients with needed resources.

**The NASW-ND respectfully requests that members of the House Human Services Committee restore the bill to the original request of \$2 million and vote Do Pass on the restored bill.**

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The North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-ND) is a membership association representing social workers in the state of North Dakota. The mission of NASW-ND is to strengthen and protect the practice of social work in North Dakota and to advance sound and equitable social policy. Our support of SB 2155 is solidly grounded in our organization's mission.