

March 8, 2023

Chairman Weisz and Members of the House Human Services Committee –

My name is Dylan Wheeler, Head of Government Affairs for Sanford Health Plan – submitting comments in **SUPPORT** of SB2265, which establishes a Dual Special Needs Program (D-SNP) in North Dakota. We appreciate the thoughtful forward looking approach by the sponsors Senators Lee and Hogan, and Representatives Dobervich and Strinden. SB2265 represents a great opportunity for the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services to work collaboratively with the health plans in the State to implement, operationalize, and optimize a DSNP in North Dakota. Based on comments and testimony during the Senate debate, it is our understanding that this plan would be open to all plans to participate, so long as criteria related to care-coordination are met.

For Sanford Health Plan, we have a long-established and firm understanding of what it takes to effectuate a Special Needs Program (SNP). Through our current Institutional Special Needs Program (I-SNP), which is a SNP for institutionalized enrollees, Sanford Health Plan has a proven approach to improve the clinical outcomes of our members through our preventative and proactive approach to health care. As we have seen with other bills this session, North Dakotans should be empowered with choice in a health plan – even with a D-SNP. Sanford Health Plan has an established SNP network within ND, which covers 15 counties across the state. In addition, we bring experience in recently implementing a Medicare Advantage plan, which is delivering another high-value high-quality insurance option in North Dakota. Finally, nearly 85% of our I-SNP population is already dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid – hence, we understand the rules, regulations, and requirements needed to care for dual eligible members.

In summation, Sanford Health Plan again appreciates the efforts of the sponsors, the ND Department of Health and Human Services, and look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders with the passage of SB2265.

Thank you for your time and diligent consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dylan Wheeler, JD, MPA
Head of Government Affairs
Sanford Health Plan