

March 20, 2023

Chairman Louser, Vice Chair Ostlie and Members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee –

My name is Dylan Wheeler, Head of Government Affairs for Sanford Health Plan, respectfully submitting remarks in **SUPPORT** to SB2389, as amended. To begin, as an integrated system and health plan, we openly welcome discussion around prior-authorization process because, ultimately, it leads to more efficient processes for our providers, and a more enjoyable plan experience for our members. We view SB2389 as an opportunity to dig in and find possible solutions to perceived problems – ideally looking towards a unique North Dakota solution.

Over the course of the last couple months we have engaged in discussions with bill proponents and initially took an opposition stance to the initial draft. This was due in large part to a handful of unresolved issues, broad scope, and operational/implementation impact it would have had. However, the amendment represents an initial compromise that we had brought forward to SB2389 prior to session and thus stand in support of an interim study looking to better understand prior-authorization processes. Looking forward, and as the study looks to address, it will take substantial input from all interested stakeholders to develop a potential North Dakota solution. Of note, in the near future, a Federal rule is likely to be published that may alleviate some concerns in the industry regarding flow and transparency of medical necessity information, patient prior-authorization history, and incorporating other best practices.

We appreciate the diligent consideration by the Senate Human Services committee, and Senator Cleary for bringing forth the amended version. We too, appreciate the consideration that this committee will bring as well.

Please let me know there may be any follow up questions that I can assist with.

Respectfully submitted,

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