

March 14th, 2023

From: Gabriela Balf, MD, MPH

Re: In Support of HB 1416

Madam Chair Lee, esteemed Committee Members,

My name is Gabriela Balf, I am a psychiatrist in private practice in Bismack, and I speak on my own behalf.

This bill supports my patients who are part of a health plan insurer and want to pursue the specialty care that I provide, but their plan would not cover, even if I am an in-network provider for that particular plan.

My policy and pledge to the community is to see people when they need to be seen. I will see a new patient within 2 days. I will see them as often as needed, at the intervals of care needed. A certain plan could only give the earliest appointment in six months. That plan also does NOT have in Bismarck specialists in my areas of expertise. Patients would have to travel to Fargo for appointments that may take months to happen.

Thank you for ensuring access to timely, good quality specialty care for our citizens, I urge you to vote DO PASS on HB 1416.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Balf" followed by a stylized arrow pointing to the right.

Gabriela Balf, MD, MPH

Clin Assoc Prof – UND Dept of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science