

NORTH DAKOTANS for Open Access Healthcare

Madam Chair Lee, Vice Chairman Cleary, and members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

North Dakotans for Open Access Healthcare is a coalition of independent medical practitioners, medical facilities, medical associations and independent hospitals that support patient choice. We strongly support HB 1416.

The genesis of the Patient Choice bill is the result of the increasing number of patients and providers across the state voicing their concerns about narrow network plans, particularly narrow network plans that have **ZERO out-of-network coverage**. The obvious difficulty with narrow network plans in a rural state is patient access to providers, particularly when it comes to medical specialists. It has become more common to hear patients' concerns when needing specialty care. Patients often experience long wait times, and in the case of rural areas, patients often drive past an out-of-network specialist right in their own community. HB 1416 allows patients to choose the providers they know and trust.

HB 1416 increases competition. Competition in health care markets benefits consumers because it helps contain costs, improves quality, and encourages innovation.

An excerpt from the results of the North Dakota Legislative Management Interim Health Care Study shares that, "Competition stimulates innovation – lower prices and better quality. Competition is the ultimate consumer protection because it allows a consumer to walk away from a transaction to find a better partner."

It's important to remember - patient choice legislation is not "any willing provider" at "any willing price." The insurance companies still control the fee schedules, and if a provider chooses to participate the provider still needs to negotiate and agree to the insurance plans terms and conditions.

Patient choice legislation permits the patient to choose who they trust to care for their healthcare needs. Insurance companies will negotiate with all willing, licensed, and qualified healthcare providers for inclusion in their networks.

Patient Choice will increase competition and help control spiraling healthcare costs in North Dakota.

We strongly encourage a **DO PASS** recommendation from your committee.

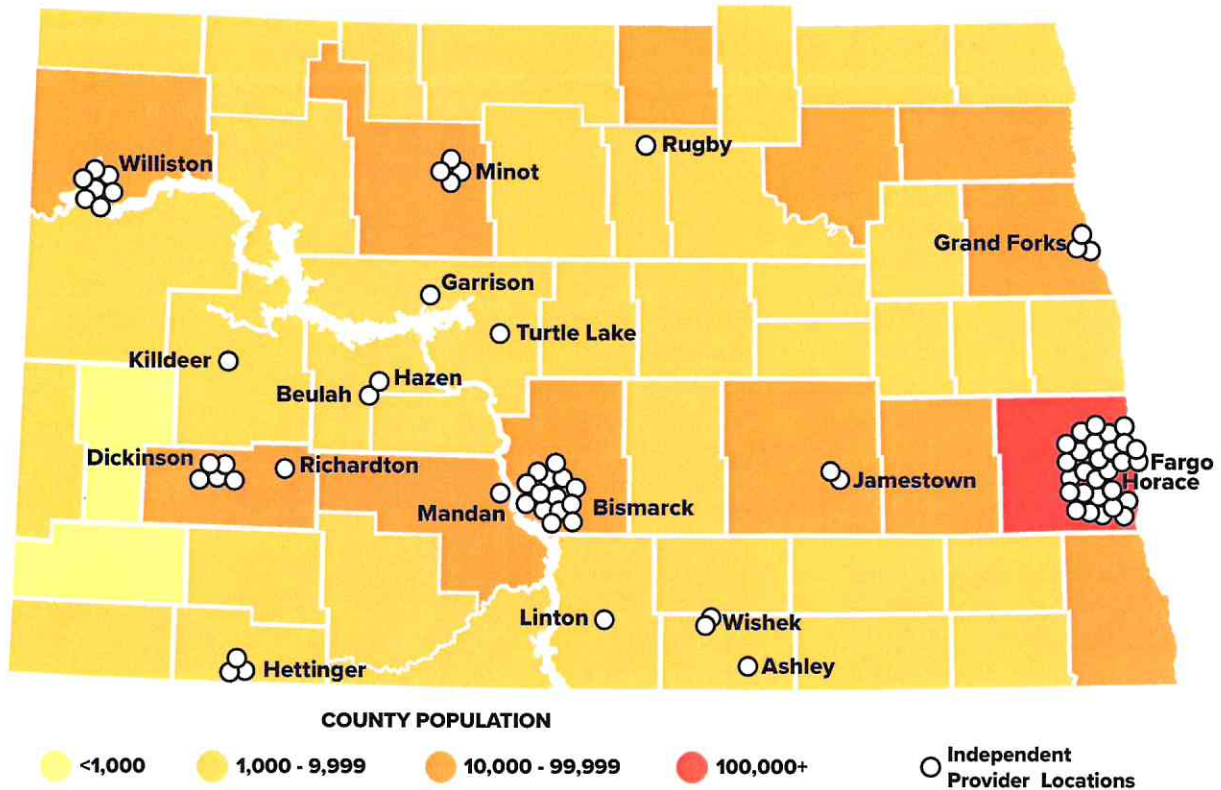
Sincerely,

North Dakotans for Open Access Healthcare



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Independent Providers Supporting HB1416



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| ○ AIM Physical Therapy, Bismarck | ○ Dakota Gastroenterology, Fargo | ○ North Dakota Dental Association |
| ○ Bagan Strinden Vision, Fargo | ○ Dakota Littles, Williston | ○ North Dakota Medical Association |
| ○ Balance Medical, Bismarck | ○ Elite Health and Fitness, Williston | ○ North Dakota Nurse Practitioner Association |
| ○ BeWell PT, Horace | ○ Elite PT, Dickinson | ○ Northern Neurosurgery, Fargo |
| ○ Bismarck Surgical Associates, Bismarck | ○ Empowered Life Counseling, PLLC, Fargo | ○ Origin Chiropractic Physicians, Fargo |
| ○ The Bone & Joint Center: Bismarck, Minot, Williston, Beulah, Hazen, Turtle Lake, Wishek, Garrison, Linton, Dickinson, and Hettinger | ○ Eye Clinic of ND: Bismarck, Dickinson, and Hettinger | ○ Ortho Dakota, Fargo and Grand Forks |
| ○ Brightside, Bismarck | ○ Eye Consultants of ND, Fargo | ○ OSM Ortho Sports, Fargo |
| ○ Canopy Medical Center, Fargo | ○ Fargo Center for Dermatology, Fargo | ○ Pain Treatment Center Anesthesiologists, Bismarck |
| ○ Catalyst Medical Center: Fargo, Grand Forks, and Jamestown | ○ First Choice PT, Minot | ○ Pelican Health, Bismarck |
| ○ CCs Physical Therapy, Bismarck | ○ Heartland Healthcare Network, Fargo | ○ Pinnacle Health Care, Fargo |
| ○ Center for Pain Medicine, Fargo | ○ Hearth of America, Rugby | ○ Plains ENT, Fargo |
| ○ Center for Plastic Surgery, Fargo | ○ Hetland ENT, Bismarck | ○ Solace Counseling, Fargo |
| ○ Center Special Surgery, Fargo | ○ IMA Healthcare, Fargo | ○ South Central Health, Wishek |
| ○ Chatter Pediatric Therapy: Williston, Dickinson, and Jamestown | ○ Imaging Solutions, Fargo | ○ Stellar Healthcare, Fargo |
| ○ ConnectUS Therapy, Williston | ○ Institute of Diagnostic Imaging, Fargo | ○ Tara B Fertility, Ashley and Bismarck |
| ○ CPAP Store and Sleep Easy, Fargo and Grand Forks | ○ Institute of Facial Surgery, Bismarck | ○ Therapy Solutions, Dickinson, Killdeer, and Richardton |
| ○ Dakota Adult and Pediatric Psych, Fargo | ○ Jones Physical Therapy, Bismarck | ○ Vance Thompson Vision, Fargo |
| | ○ Kids in Motion, Mandan | ○ Van Dam Chiropractor, Fargo |
| | ○ Live in Motion PT, Williston | ○ West River Health, Hettinger |
| | ○ Matthys Ortho, Fargo | ○ 360 Physical Therapy, Minot |
| | ○ Milestone Health Partners, Williston | |
| | ○ Minot Center for Pediatric Therapy, Minot | |