



Good Morning Senator Lee and Fellow Committee Members;

My name is Rochelle Vander Vliet. I am a Director of one of the hospice agencies in our state, as well as the President of the North Dakota Hospice Organization. Currently our organization represents 10 Medicare certified hospices: CHI in Bismarck, Dickinson, Williston, Valley City, Hospice of the Red River Valley in Fargo, Heart of America Hospice in Rugby, Sakakawea Hospice in Hazen, Jamestown Hospice, Sanford Hospice in Bismarck, Trinity Hospice, Minot.

As an organization, we support the hospice philosophy and would like to see hospice services expanded in North Dakota. We recognize that there are areas in our state where hospice services are not currently available, particularly in rural areas. We also believe in working collaboratively for the greater good to expand hospice services in the state.

That being said, we do have concerns with the way Senate Bill 2332 is drafted to benefit one hospice entity instead of giving the option of grant funding to be available for multiple organizations. With additional funding, established hospice agencies would have the opportunity to increase their service areas in their given locality, thus benefiting more residents overall.

Therefore we would like amendments to allow multiple organizations to apply and be awarded grant funding for projects related to primary, palliative and hospice services. We would also like provisions ensuring the rural and underserved areas are benefiting from the grant projects rather than new hospice services in areas with established hospice services, and are seeking clarification on the specific language surrounding the "six regional offices" and "two 12-bed inpatient units."

We believe a collaborative group of stakeholders should be required to assist in the process to ensure the available funds provide the greatest impact. The ND Hospice Organization would like to be part of this process.

We are not In Favor of this bill as currently written because it does not allow for inclusion of all hospice agencies in the state. We would only support this bill with the said amendments or a bill that was re-introduced to include perspectives and input from hospice agency stakeholders across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

If you need any information, please contact:

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