

2023 Senate Bill No. 2389
Testimony before the Senate Human Services Committee
Presented by Tim Wahlin
Workforce Safety and Insurance
Date: February 15, 2023

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tim Wahlin, Chief of Injury Services at Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI). I am here today to provide testimony regarding Senate Bill No. 2389. The WSI Board has taken a neutral position on this bill as amended. In the event the amendment fails, the WSI Board would oppose passage of this bill.

The proposed legislation appears to exclude the agency from its scope, but there exists some uncertainty. In an effort to clarify the agency's exclusion, we offer the attached amendment. The amendment would treat WSI like North Dakota State Medicaid.

Workforce Safety and Insurance is a state agency responsible for providing workers' compensation insurance to all North Dakota employers. Benefits paid include wage replacement, all related medical, including pharmacy benefits, for work related injuries. The agency maintains a managed care program which both lowers costs and targets better medical outcomes. The agency is statutorily mandated to operate in this manner. WSI contracts with managed care reviewers and utilizes published scientific based standards to assist in these reviews.

In the event the bill is not amended as we propose and it is later determined WSI is constrained by this legislation, it would pose meaningful and detrimental consequences for the organization and correspondingly raise medical costs.

For these reasons WSI's Board requests adoption of the clarifying amendment.

This concludes my testimony and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL NO. 2389

Page 3, line 5, after "assistance" insert ",workforce safety and insurance"

Renumber accordingly