



2023 House Bill 1030
Senate Workforce Development Committee
Senator Michael Wobbema, Chairman
March 2, 2023

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee, my name is Tim Blasl. I am the President of the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA) which represents hospitals and health systems across the state. I testify in support of engrossed House Bill 1030 and ask that you give it a **Do Pass** recommendation.

Hospitals support the bill because it helps with our number one challenge: workforce. The scarcity of health care professionals in all disciplines - not only physicians, advanced practice providers and nurses but also medical imaging techs, physical therapists, psychologists, and many others - challenges our hospitals in both rural and urban areas. To the extent that we can make it easier for health care professionals to become trained and ready to work in North Dakota, it helps hospitals provide the care that patients need close to home. The skilled workforce student loan repayment and scholarship program in this bill would help recruit and retain health care workers in North Dakota if those workers know they will not be saddled with student loan debt in order to get the necessary training.

I do not have the magical answer to solve the workforce shortage, but providing scholarships and student loan repayment to those interested in going into a skilled worker position is definitely part of the solution.

Please give the bill a **Do Pass** recommendation. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Blasl, President
North Dakota Hospital Association