

January 25, 2023

Re: Testimony in support of SB 2287

Dear Chairman Wobbema, Vice Chair, and members of the Workforce Development Committee,

I'm Dr. Beth Sanford, President-Elect of the North Dakota Nurses Association and a member of the Nursing Recruitment and Retention committee, comprised of members of other state nursing associations.

We are bringing forward this bill SB2287, RN student loan forgiveness, as an immediate strategy to attract a nursing workforce to meet staffing demands.

Offering student loan forgiveness has been used for years to attract teachers and doctors to rural areas. Hospitals in small communities often offer supporting loan reimbursement. It works for the agreement period. However, the cost of nursing school has risen tremendously, with students graduating with 40-80K of debt.

The profession of nursing needs to do something drastic now to encourage North Dakota residents and residents of other states to enter the profession and choose to live and work in North Dakota.

Loan Forgiveness Works. It is essentially a tiebreaker for an individual nurse making the decision of where to buy a home, live and work.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Can I answer any questions?

Beth Sanford, DNP, MSN, RN, ACN, CLC

President-Elect of the North Dakota Nurses Association