

Testimony in support of House Bill 1473:

February 10, 2025

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Alyssa Wolden, and I am a Pharmacist with Coal Country Community Health Center, which provides essential medical services to the rural communities of Beulah, Hazen, Center, and Killdeer. I am aware of the profound importance of the 340B program to our Health Center's patients, as it offers crucial access to medications and vital health programs.

The manufacturer requirements and restrictions have significantly impacted our 340B program. Initially, we intended to continue our operations as usual and exclude manufacturers whose requirements we could not meet, expecting only a few. However, by early 2024, we realized that for our program to survive, we needed to adapt and start attempting to meet these requirements.

It is virtually impossible for our program to gain the access to medications we once had with the current manufacturer requirements and restrictions. Despite our best efforts to overcome the multitude of barriers and steps outlined in the manufacturers' 340B policies, and even with the addition of dedicated staff and advanced technology, the challenges persist. The lack of a standardized framework for manufacturer requirements and restrictions within these policies has made it exceptionally difficult for us to navigate each policy and remain up-to-date with their frequent changes. These constant updates often necessitate adjustments or actions within our program, further complicating our efforts to provide essential care.

Our 340B program adheres to standardized requirements, including comprehensive monitoring, detailed reporting, and thorough internal auditing, as mandated by HRSA and the Office of Pharmacy Affairs Information System. While these processes require substantial time and resources, they ensure patient eligibility and program compliance. Despite being smaller than most, we take immense pride in the transparency of our policies and procedures, as well as our unwavering commitment to a patient-centered approach.

House Bill 1473 protects our 340B programs, our patients' access to medications and services, and allows us to focus on "What more can we do for our patients?" rather than "How do we keep our program operational?"

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to consider the vital role the 340B program plays for rural North Dakota and to support measures that will ensure its sustainability.