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House Industry, Business and Labor Committee

Senate Bill 2280 - March 24, 2025

Testimony of Micah Olson, P&A Position-In Support

My name is Micah Olson. I am an attorney at North Dakota Protection & Advocacy.

P&A supports SB 2280, as it supports individuals with disabilities as they seek medical services to maintain and/or regain their health. Many individuals with disabilities need lifelong health care for physical and behavioral health needs and for complex medical conditions. This bill would ensure that medical decisions remain between individuals and their doctor, who best know and understand their medical needs.

Obtaining authorization for care and treatment can be complicated, confusing, and burdensome to some individuals. Difficulties in obtaining authorization can cause disabled individuals to not seek necessary medical care. This can seriously impact their current and future health. A delay in care can exacerbate illness; requiring longer hospitalizations, more expensive treatment, and long-term outcomes that impact health, employment and longevity. When emergency events can be timely treated, hospitalizations and complications can be reduced. Eliminating prior authorization for emergency medical services ensures individuals receive timely care.

This bill would safeguard against delays and disruptions by streamlining the prior authorization process. It guarantees continuity of care by honoring prior authorizations for at least 60 days when an enrollee changes insurers. It protects against retrospective denials once approval is granted. It cannot be revoked for 45 business days. This bill provides a regulatory framework that ensures prior authorization is efficient, consistent and in a manner that provides access to medical care in a timely manner.

P&A is in strong support of SB 2280 and requests a Do Pass on this bill to protect the health of all North Dakota citizens.