

**House Education Committee
Chairman Todd Beard
Jan. 22, 2025
SB 2147**

Chairman Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Marnie Walth and I am Head of Government Affairs at Sanford Health. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2147.

As you know, the biggest challenge North Dakota businesses and organizations face is workforce. Healthcare is no exception. Sanford Health in North Dakota currently has hundreds of unfilled high-need positions, including openings for nurses, respiratory therapists, lab technicians and patient care technicians.

In 2020, Sanford spent more than \$25 million to hire 464 independent contract labor staff on varying assignments to offset staffing gaps in our clinics and hospitals. Flash forward to 2025 and we have dramatically reduced our need for contract labor thanks in large part to workforce development programs created and supported by our state legislature. Sanford has leveraged the Career Builders program to fill more than 20 positions.

Healthcare is the highest user of the Career Builders program accounting for approximately 30 percent of the new hires secured through this innovative financial incentive program. The opportunity to add the State's Career Builders program to the tools we have to recruit and retain workforce is both appreciated and proving to be highly effective. By providing an incentive for recent graduates to stay and work in North Dakota, the State has created a successful approach to attracting new graduates.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 2147. I would stand for any questions you may have.

Marnie Walth, Government Affairs
Sanford Health
Marnie.Walth@SanfordHealth.org
701-471-7211 (mobile)