



February 4, 2025

Chairperson/Senator Barta and Members of the Committee,

I am a licensed physical therapist from Grand Forks. I am submitting this written testimony on behalf of APTA North Dakota, the membership association of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in North Dakota. I currently serve as president for this association.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of Senate Bill 2280, which aims to improve the prior authorization process in healthcare. As a healthcare provider, I have witnessed firsthand how the current system creates unnecessary barriers to timely and effective patient care.

Prior authorization was originally intended as a cost-control measure for insurers, but over time, it has become an excessive administrative burden for providers and a significant obstacle for patients in need of essential treatments. On average, physicians and their staff spend nearly two full business days per week completing prior authorization requests, with 92% of providers reporting that the process results in care delays. Additionally, 33% have witnessed serious adverse events due to these delays, and 80% have seen patients abandon treatment altogether because of prior authorization hurdles.

Senate Bill 2280 proposes common-sense reforms to address these issues. By standardizing definitions, ensuring prior authorizations for maintenance medications remain valid for at least one year, and requiring timely insurer responses—24 hours for urgent care and two business days for non-urgent cases—this bill will improve patient outcomes and reduce administrative burdens on healthcare professionals. Furthermore, requiring licensed physicians of the same specialty to review requests will ensure more informed and fair decision-making.

Twenty-three states have enacted over 43 bills addressing prior authorization reform in recent years, signaling broad bipartisan recognition of the need for change. Senate Bill 2280 aligns with these efforts to ensure that patients receive timely, necessary care without undue delay. I urge you to vote YES on this critical piece of legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cindy Flom-Meland

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President, APTA North Dakota

APTA North Dakota

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