

**2019 SENATE EDUCATION**

**SB 2143**

# 2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Sheyenne River Room, State Capitol

SB 2143  
1/14/2019  
30748

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Lynn Wolf
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## **Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:**

A bill relating to relating to the health care professional student loan repayment program.

## **Minutes:**

Att. #1 - Bobbie Will
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**Chairman Schaible:** SB 2143, Senator Roers.

**Senator Roers:** Thank you Chairman Schaible. Senator Howard Anderson and I sit on the Health Council. In the course of our work, discovered a small wording change that would help us to administrate those programs a little more efficiently and effectively. Currently, if a person that has a loan balance of \$86,000, the current law they must receive up to you must give them up \$20,000 for up to five years. That means you have this remaining \$14,000 \$8,000 left left over until you have an entire \$100,000 to give \$25,000 times five, you can't award money to another person. Therefore, we end up with this pool of money that is intended recruit and retain people in especially rural areas – areas that have a high HPSA “up to” it would allow us give a partial amount to someone. That is the intent behind this bill.

**Chairman Schaible:** Questions? There are different loan amounts for the different categories?

**Senator Roers:** Yes, there are different totals than the example I was giving you. You have to be able to give the entire commitment before you can go out.

**Senator Rust:** The reason for “and may not exceed” then you have a dollar amount “over five years” – refresh my memory why that is stated that way.

**Senator Roers:** That was at Legislative Council at Bobbie's urging, so I will defer that to her.

**Senator Rust:** It looks to me like what you are saying by adding that, you are limiting that to five years and I was wondering is that the reason? We'll wait for her testimony.

**Chairman Schaible:** Other questions for Senator Roers. Thank you.

**Chairman Schaible:** Other testimony.

**Bobbie Will, Primary Care Office Director, ND Dept. of Health:** See Attachment # 1 Chairman Schaible, would you like to answer the question first? The second page after my testimony, has a table has an explanation. The first column has the loan repayment that we are talking about today. Each profession has a different dollar amount. The original intent was to loan out \$20,000 for five year to a total of \$100,000. If somebody had less than \$100,000, we still had to pay \$20,000 year one, \$20,000 for year two, and \$10,000 for year three. Then, it is really just a three year contract because we, of course, we never give more than what they owe. The challenge has been if we have a second provider with \$50,000, we can't award that second provider to use up that other \$50,000 because we would have pay \$20,000 in year one and \$20,000 in year two and we don't have it in that budget for that biennium, so then that \$50,000 is just gone. We are not able to use that for what it was intended and that is an underserved population.

**Chairman Schaible:** You aren't giving out awards for money you don't have?

**Bobbie Will:** We do not give out any contracts that are not in our budget, but the community match is given by the facility, so that isn't in this equation. The \$100,000 is state funds – if we are talking physician – it does vary by discipline.

**Chairman Schaible:** That is totally separate – beyond the scope of this bill.

**Bobbie Will:** It is not in this bill, but I do audit that the facility does give out it's match.

**Senator Rust:** Let's use an example: if we have a physician and the amount is \$50,000. Under the old law it says the loan repayment must be equal to \$20,000. You have to give \$20,000, \$20,000 and \$10,000. If this bill was changed, what would you do differently?

**Bobbie Will:** If I had two providers who had \$50,000, then instead of awarding just one that the current language shows, I would take the two providers and they would have \$10,000, \$10,000, \$10,000, \$10,000, \$10,000 to use the full \$100,000. If I had only one provider that applied, I would only do the \$20,000, \$20,000, \$10,000. Only if we had the opportunity to award extra providers, would we ever change what we have always done, which is the \$20,000, \$20,000, \$20,000.

**Senator Rust:** The difference is right now, it is a must be equal to \$20,000 and now you will not exceed \$20,000, so you could give two \$10,000 awards.

**Chairman Schaible:** So when you budget for this, you budget for so many people?

**Bobbie Will:** We do budget for the amounts in the budget. So if we had \$400,000 in the budget we would for four slots. If we had two that had less, we could have five slots.

**Chairman Schaible:** By creating more slots, is that going to affect future funding of what you would need or is that amount always locked?

**Bobbie Will:** It does change slightly. On the bar chart in the handout, we have a significant number with last year's saying that 91 applied and only 16 can be funded. So I want to use my budget.

**Chairman Schaible:** So your budget doesn't carry everyone through the program? Or does it?

**Bobbie Will:** The five years takes over two and a half biennia.

**Chairman Schaible:** By adding more slots, is that going to make the state agree to more funding? Are we asking for more now than in the future?

**Bobbie Will:** No this does not ask for any more.

**Chairman Schaible:** OK, other questions?

**Senator Davison:** Why are you coming forward with this now? Has it been a problem over the last few biennium? Is there something that triggered this? What changed?

**Bobbie Will:** I've only been with the program for two years, but it has been a challenge these two years and as you can see in the bar chart, our applications have gotten larger in the past two or three years, so it really has been a big barrier because when you are turning down 80 some providers who are working in ND, and we have the opportunity with this language change to award two or three more, it is a huge benefit.

**Senator Davison:** So, you are trying to maximize the dollars you are appropriated to support as many people as possible and that is what this word change does?

**Bobbie Will:** Yes.

**Chairman Schaible:** Seeing no other questions, thank you. Other testimony in favor of the bill.

**Courtney Koebele,** Representing the ND Medical Association #c109: We stand in strong support of SB 2143 for the reasons stated by Bobbie.

**Chairman Schaible:** Questions. Thank you. Other testimony in favor of the bill. Agency testimony? Testimony in opposition to? Seeing none, we'll close the hearing.

# 2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Sheyenne River Room, State Capitol

SB 2143  
1/16/2019  
30910

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Lynn Wolf

## **Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:**

A bill relating to relating to the health care professional student loan repayment program.

## **Minutes:**

**Chairman Schaible:** We'll take up SB 2143. I did talk to some of the sponsors of this bill and assured me the bill will not add additional slots now that we would be add funding in the future. They assured me that was not the case. This was just to be able to use the extra money that was available at the time, so they could use what was appropriated.

**Senator Oban:** I would move a do pass on SB 2143.

**Vice-Chairman Fors:** Second.

**A Roll Call Vote was taken: 7 yeas, 0 nays, 0 absent.**

**Motion Carried.**

**Senator Oban will carry the bill.**

Date: 1-16-19  
Roll Call Vote #: # 1

**2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2143**

Senate Education Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation:  Adopt Amendment  
 Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Without Committee Recommendation  
 As Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions:  Reconsider  \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Sen. Oban Seconded By Sen Fors

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Schaible:	✓		Senator Marcellais:	✓	
Vice-Chairman Fors:	✓		Senator Oban:	✓	
Senator Davison	✓				
Senator Elkin:	✓				
Senator Rust:	✓				

Total (Yes) 7 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Sen. Oban

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2143: Education Committee (Sen. Schaible, Chairman) recommends DO PASS**  
(7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2143 was placed on the  
Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2019 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES**

**SB 2143**

# 2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Human Services Committee**  
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

SB 2143  
2/27/2019  
32954

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Nicole Klamann

## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to the health care professional student loan repayment program

## Minutes:

3

Senator K. Roers: introduced bill, no written testimony provided.

**Bobbie Will**, Primary Care Office director ND Dept. of Health: In support, written provided see **attachment 1**.  
(0:07:51)

**Chairman Weisz**: Funding was under enough that you could have funded 2 more.

**Bobbie Will**: Yes

**Mandy Peterson**, Senior Analyst with Healthcare Workforce Group Univ. of ND School of Medicine and Health Services, written testimony **attachment 2**  
(0:10:20)

**Holly Johnson**, Behavior Analyst, Pres of ND Ass for Behavior analysis (NDABA), Appointed member of the ND Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Task Force: In support see **attachment 3**

**Chairman Weisz**: closed hearing

# 2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Human Services Committee**  
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

SB 2143  
3/5/2019  
33220

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Nicole Klaman by Donna Whetham

## **Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:**

Relating to the health care professional student loan repayment program

## **Minutes:**

**Chairman Weisz:** Opened the hearing on SB 2143. This bill has to do with the loan repayment.

**Rep. Dobervich:** I move a Do Pass on SB 2143.

**Rep. D. Anderson:** Seconded.

**Chairman Weisz:** I feel this is something we missed last session. The behavioral analyst needed to be added in and they wanted a specific slot. Any discussion?

**Rep. M. Ruby:** I have a note that says the Legislators isn't the group that sets who can apply. I think it is set by the board that oversees it, not us.

**Chairman Weisz:** Under the behavioral health we listed all those that would be able to qualify. They wanted two or three different slots and we had not done that. We had left it up to the Health council. I wanted to bring this up to make sure we had the discussion about it.

**Rep. Skroch:** Do I understand that they can do this already without this?

**Chairman Weisz:** We need the bill for sure to allow them to have the flexibility of not giving them the exact \$20,000 for example, because that limited them. So if there was money left on the table and they could help two additional. The behavioral analyst came in and wanted two specific slots. They thought they would never get one based on the 91 or so that applied. All the others are grouped into the Behavioral Health and we leave that up to the Health council to decide on.

**Rep. M. Ruby:** What Holly Johnson was asking was to have Behavioral Analyst included. We don't do that. We are not the ones that set that. I did pull it up in code and it says "The Health Council shall establish criteria to be used in selecting the public and private entities" It doesn't have a specific carve out, we don't list what jobs can apply for this.

**Chairman Weisz:** Correct, so Holly Johnson wanted a specific carve out. Any further discussion? We have a motion for a Do Pass on SB 2143. The clerk will call the roll.

**Roll call vote:** Yes 13 No 0 Absent 1. Motion carries.

**Rep. D. Anderson:** Will carry the bill.

Hearing closed.

**2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
 ROLL CALL VOTES  
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. SB 2143**

House Human Services Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation:  Adopt Amendment  
 Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Without Committee Recommendation  
 As Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Place on Consent Calendar

Other Actions:  Reconsider  \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Rep. Dobervich Seconded By Rep. D. Anderson

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Robin Weisz - Chairman	X		Gretchen Dobervich	X	
Karen M. Rohr – Vice Chairman	X		Mary Schneider	X	
Dick Anderson	X				
Chuck Damschen	X				
Bill Devlin	X				
Clayton Fegley	X				
Dwight Kiefert	X				
Todd Porter	X				
Matthew Ruby	X				
Bill Tveit	A				
Greg Westlind	X				
Kathy Skroch	X				

Total (Yes) 13 No 0

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Rep. D. Anderson

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2143: Human Services Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2143 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

**2019 TESTIMONY**

**SB 2143**

Good afternoon, Chairman Schaible and members of the Education Committee. My name is Bobbie Will, and I am the Primary Care Office Director at the North Dakota Department of Health. I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 2143.

In 1994, the North Dakota State Legislature established student loan repayments for certain health care professionals to increase the number of providers in areas of the state with defined health professional shortages. Eligible providers include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, certified nurse midwives and most recently behavioral health professionals. Individuals apply after they have secured employment in a rural, underserved area and are licensed in the state. Loan repayment serves as an incentive to recruit and retain providers in these areas of need.

The Health Professional Student Loan Repayment Program has been successful in addressing workforce shortages. Last year we had 91 physicians, advanced practice providers, and behavioral health providers apply for the health care professional loan repayment program and awarded funding to 16 providers.

Currently, 43-12.3-06 requires equal payments be distributed over a five-year period equaling a maximum amount. There have been circumstances where an awardees remaining loans are less than what is required to be paid

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Att. #1  
p2084

out over the five years leaving unspent funding that cannot be utilized. The proposed amendments in Senate Bill 2143 will allow flexibility for the State Health Council to award additional providers if a provider's loan amount is less than the maximum amount allowed per profession. In 2018, the Department of Health could have awarded funding to at least two additional providers should the proposed language change have been in effect.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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# LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FACTS

## NORTH DAKOTA HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL Student Loan Repayment Program

### ELIGIBLE DISCIPLINES

- Physicians
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurses
- Physician Assistants
- Clinical Psychologists  
(licensed by the State Board of Psychologist Examiners)
- Behavioral Health Professionals:
- Licensed Addiction Counselors
- Licensed Social Workers
- Registered Nurses
- Specialty Practice Registered Nurses

### WHERE PROVIDERS SERVE

Providers must serve in areas of the state with a defined need for such services.

### FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Providers can enter into an agreement up to 5 years.

Discipline	State Match	Community Match
Physician	\$100,000	\$50,000
APRN, PA	\$20,000	\$2,000
Clinical Psychologist	\$60,000	\$15,000
Behavioral Health	\$20,000	\$2,000

### PROVIDER SELECTION CRITERIA

- Health care professional's specialty
- Need for the specialty in the area
- Education and experience
- Date of availability and anticipated term of availability
- Willingness to accept Medicaid and Medicare patients
- Length of residency in North Dakota
- Attendance at an in-state or out-of-state institution

### COMMUNITY SELECTION CRITERIA

Public and private entities are eligible for this program.

Site criteria is based on the following factors:

- Located in an area that is statistically under served
- Located at least 20 miles outside the boundary of a city with more than 40,000

## NORTH DAKOTA DENTAL Loan Repayment Program

### ELIGIBLE DISCIPLINES

General/Pediatric Dentistry (DDS, DMD)

### WHERE PROVIDERS SERVE

Dentists must serve a public health clinic, practice with a focus on an under served population, or a nonprofit clinic.

### FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Providers can enter into an agreement up to 5 years for a total award of \$100,000.

### PROVIDER SELECTION CRITERIA

- Be fully licensed to practice in North Dakota;
- Dentist located in a federally designated Dental Health Professional Shortage Area or a state-defined critical shortage area;
- Dentists trained in general or pediatric dentistry or in a dental specialty where such services are needed in the identified city or surrounding areas;
- Accept Medicare and Medicaid patients; and
- A dentist selected for loan repayment who practices within fifteen miles (24.14 kilometers) of the city limits of one of the three largest cities in the state must:
  - have received dental medical payments of twenty thousand dollars in the form of medical assistance reimbursement; or
  - have practiced at least two full workdays per week at a public health clinic or a nonprofit dental clinic that uses a sliding fee schedule for patient billing.

### COMMUNITY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Priority is given to sites or clinics in the following categories: dental services provided in a public health clinic, a practice with a focus on an under served population, or a nonprofit dental clinic.



Bobbie Will • [blwill@nd.gov](mailto:blwill@nd.gov) • 701-328-4908  
 North Dakota State Loan Repayment Programs  
<http://www.ndhealth.gov/pco/main.asp>  
<https://ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/primary-care-office>

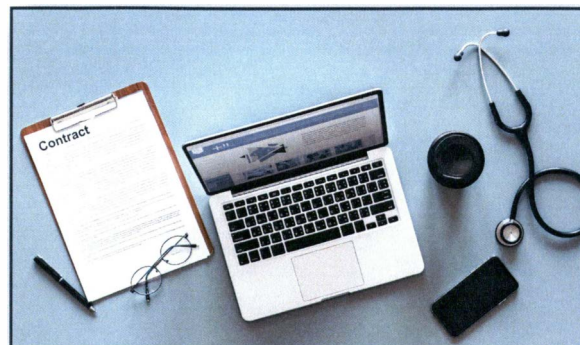


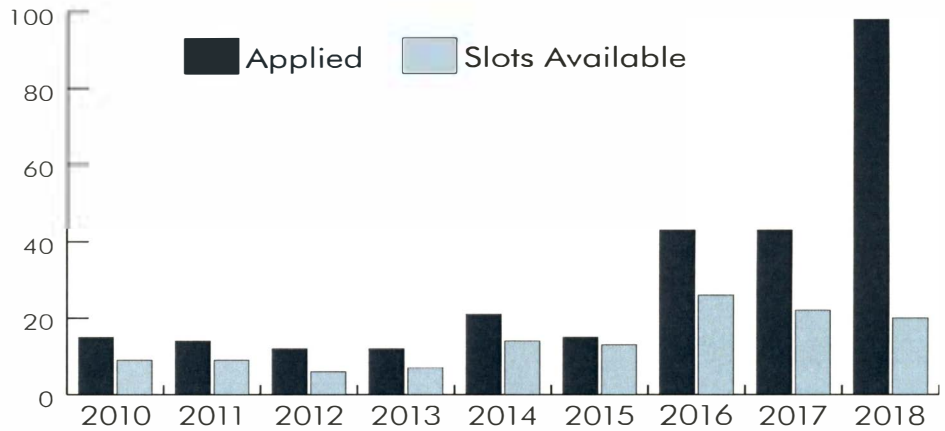
Photo by rawpixel on Unsplash

# LOAN REPAYMENT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED VS SLOTS AVAILABLE

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1-14-19  
Att # 1  
p 4 of 4

Summary of total loan repayment applicants versus the number of awards available based on funding for the years 2010 through 2018.

Includes Dentists, Physicians, Advanced Practice Providers (PA & NP), Psychologists and Behavioral Health Providers.



## THE NEED VS FUNDING AVAILABLE

	Dentists	Physicians	Advanced Practice Providers (PA & NP)	Psychologists	Behavioral Health Providers
<b>2010</b>					
Number Applied	8	4	3	n/a	n/a
Number Available to Award based on funding	3	4	2	n/a	n/a
<b>2011</b>					
Number Applied	8	3	3	n/a	n/a
Number Available to Award based on funding	3	3	3	n/a	n/a
<b>2012</b>					
Number Applied	8	4	0	n/a	n/a
Number Available to Award based on funding	3	3	info unavailable	n/a	n/a
<b>2013</b>					
Number Applied	8	4	0	n/a	n/a
Number Available to Award based on funding	3	4	info unavailable	n/a	n/a
<b>2014</b>					
Number Applied	5	12	4	n/a	n/a
Number Available to Award based on funding	3	7	4	n/a	n/a
<b>2015</b>					
Number Applied	5	3	7	n/a	n/a
Number Available to Award based on funding	3	3	7	n/a	n/a
<b>2016</b>					
Number Applied	8	7	11	1	16
Number Available to Award based on funding	8	3	4	1	10
<b>2017</b>					
Number Applied	9	11	12	1	10
Number Available to Award based on funding	4	4	4	1	9
<b>2018</b>					
Number Applied	7	7	15	5	64
Number Available to Award based on funding	4	4	4	2	6

<b>PHYSICIANS</b> 1993-2018 55 CONTRACTS COMPLETED <b>71%</b> OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND	<b>DENTISTS</b> 2001-2018 43 CONTRACTS COMPLETED <b>86%</b> OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND	<b>PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS</b> 1994-2018 14 CONTRACTS COMPLETED <b>79%</b> OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND	<b>NURSE PRACTITIONERS</b> 1997-2018 15 CONTRACTS COMPLETED <b>87%</b> OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND
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#1  
SB 2143  
2/27/19  
Pg. 1

Good afternoon, Chairman Weisz and members of the Human Service Committee. My name is Bobbie Will, and I am the Primary Care Office Director at the North Dakota Department of Health. I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 2143.

In 1994, the North Dakota State Legislature established student loan repayments for certain health care professionals to increase the number of providers in areas of the state with defined health professional shortages. Eligible providers include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, certified nurse midwives and most recently behavioral health professionals. Individuals apply after they have secured employment in a rural, underserved area and are licensed in the state. Loan repayment serves as an incentive to recruit and retain providers in these areas of need.

The Health Professional Student Loan Repayment Program has been successful in addressing workforce shortages. Last year we had 91 physicians, advanced practice providers, and behavioral health providers apply for the health care professional loan repayment program and awarded funding to 16 providers.

Currently, 43-12.3-06 requires a specific payment amount by discipline each year not to exceed a specific total contract award over five years. There have been circumstances where an awardee's outstanding loans are paid in

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2127119  
B2

less than five years based on the current statutorily required annual payment. This results in holding them under contract in our rural communities less than the intended five years and in funding that cannot be utilized for other contracts. The proposed amendments in Senate Bill 2143 will allow flexibility for the State Health Council to award additional providers within the current appropriation if a provider's loan amount is less than the maximum amount allowed per profession. This flexibility to award providers at a lesser amount would increase providers in underserved areas for at least 5 years. In 2018, the Department of Health could have awarded funding to at least two additional providers should the proposed language change have been in effect.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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### WHERE PROVIDERS SERVE

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### FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Providers can enter into an agreement up to 5 years.

Discipline	State Match	Community Match
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## NORTH DAKOTA DENTAL Loan Repayment Program

### ELIGIBLE DISCIPLINES

General/Pediatric Dentistry (DDS, DMD)

### WHERE PROVIDERS SERVE

Dentists must serve a public health clinic, practice with a focus on an underserved population, or a nonprofit clinic.

### FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Providers can enter into an agreement up to 5 years for a total award of \$100,000.

### PROVIDER SELECTION CRITERIA

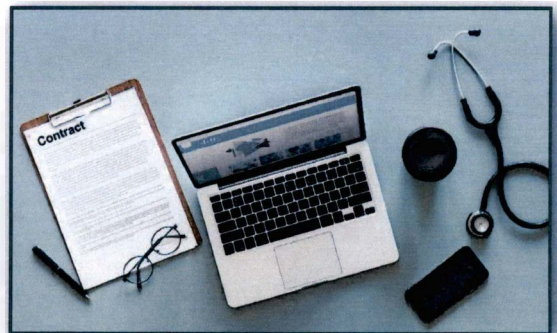
- Be fully licensed to practice in North Dakota;
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 North Dakota State Loan Repayment Programs  
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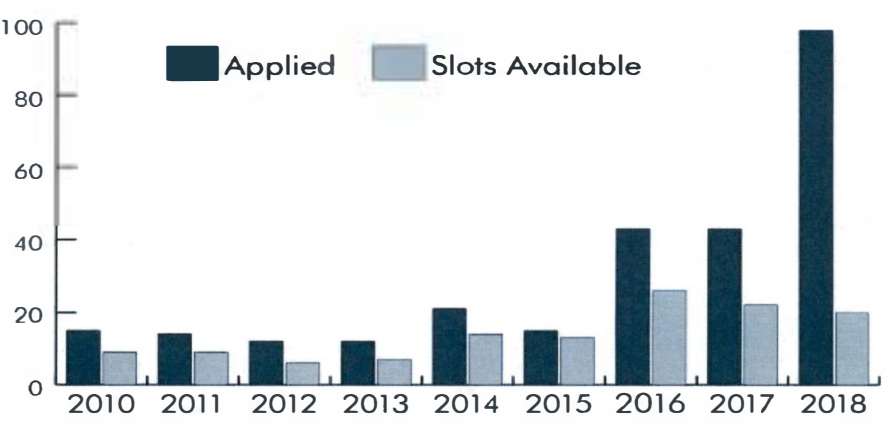


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## LOAN REPAYMENT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED VS SLOTS AVAILABLE

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**PHYSICIANS**  
1993-2018

55 CONTRACTS COMPLETED

**71%**

OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND

**DENTISTS**  
2001-2018

43 CONTRACTS COMPLETED

**86%**

OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND

**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**  
1994-2018

14 CONTRACTS COMPLETED

**79%**

OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND

**NURSE PRACTITIONERS**  
1997-2018

15 CONTRACTS COMPLETED

**87%**

OF THE CONTRACTED REMAIN IN ND

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# FEDERAL STATE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM (SLRP)

**ELIGIBLE DISCIPLINES**

- Physicians (MD/DO) (FP, IM, PED, OBGYN)
- General/Pediatric Dentistry
- Primary Care Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, Certified Nurse Midwife
- Registered Dental Hygienist
- Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Professional Counselor, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychiatric Nurse Specialist
- Registered Nurse
- Pharmacist

**WHERE PROVIDERS SERVE**

- Providers must serve in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs)

**FINANCIAL BENEFITS**

- Receive up to \$50,000/year for year 1 and 2 (Example: \$50,000 Federal Funds, \$50,000 Community Match)
- Receive up to \$20,000/year for year 3 and 4
- Receive up to \$10,000/year for year 5
- Site or community organization must provide a 1:1 match

**PROVIDER SELECTION CRITERIA**

- U.S. citizen or U.S. national
- Must not have outstanding contractual obligations for health professional service
- Must not have a judgment lien against their property for a debt to the U.S.
- Must not be excluded, debarred, suspended or disqualified by a Federal agency
- Have unpaid government or commercial loans for school tuition, reasonable educational expenses, and reasonable living expenses, segregated from all other debts

**COMMUNITY SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Must be located in HPSA
- Sites must be public or nonprofit private status
- See all patients regardless of ability to pay
- Accept patients covered by Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP
- Not discriminate in the provision of services
- Must have sliding fee scale or charity care plan.

**SERVICE COMMITMENT**

- Must practice a minimum of two years. Full-time and part-time practice is available.

Oakes, Mayville, Ashley, Wishek, Northwood, Elgin, Hazen, Cando, Rugby, Grafton, Napoleon, Jamestown, Cavalier, Garrison, Carrington, Tioga, Enderlin, ND State Hospital, ND Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

2013-2018  
**18** CONTRACTS COMPLETED  
**94%**  
OF THE CONTRACTED  
REMAIN IN ND

## SLRP by Year and Discipline

<b>2013</b>	<b>TOTAL 5</b>
Medical Doctor .....	1
Dentist .....	3
Nurse Practitioner.....	1
<b>2014</b>	<b>TOTAL 3</b>
Medical Doctor .....	1
Dentist .....	1
Nurse Practitioner.....	1
<b>2015</b>	<b>TOTAL 3</b>
Osteopathic Doctor .....	1
Doctor of Pharmacy .....	1
Psychologist .....	1
<b>2016</b>	<b>TOTAL 6</b>
Doctor of Pharmacy .....	1
Clinical Nurse Specialist .....	2
Nurse Practitioner.....	2
Physician's Assistant.....	1
<b>2017</b>	<b>TOTAL 7</b>
Medical Doctor .....	1
Nurse Practitioner.....	5
Physician's Assistant.....	1
<b>2018</b>	<b>TOTAL 13</b>
Doctor of Pharmacy .....	1
Registered Nurse .....	3
Nurse Practitioner.....	3
Physician's Assistant.....	6

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Bobbie Will • blwill@nd.gov • 701-328-4908  
North Dakota State Loan Repayment Programs  
<http://www.ndhealth.gov/pco/main.asp>  
<https://uihealth.und.edu/projects/primary-care-office>

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SB 2143  
2/27/19  
pg. 1

66th Legislative Session  
Testimony  
House Human Services  
February 27, 2019

Chairman and other members of the Committee. I am Mandi-Leigh Peterson, I serve as a senior research analyst with the Healthcare Workforce Group at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The Primary Care Office, which administers the North Dakota State Loan Repayment Program, has provided, and continues to provide, a valuable recruitment and retention tool in the form of loan repayments for health professionals. This program requires providers to serve in an area that has a defined need based on population or geography which can improve access to care in rural and underserved communities where services may not otherwise be provided. In the *Loan Repayment Facts* document that was presented by Bobbie Will, the Director of the North Dakota Primary Care Office, you will find excellent retention rates for those professions with available outcome data.

In 2016, behavioral health providers and psychologists were added to the eligible professions. As the contract time frame for state loan repayment is five years, outcome data are not available at this time. However, the trend of applicants for behavioral health loan repayment increased at a rate of 5 times from 2017 to 2018. This is indicative of a need for behavioral health professional loan repayment.

Thank you for your time and I welcome any questions.

Respectfully submitted  
Mandi-Leigh Peterson  
Healthcare Workforce Group  
University of North Dakota, School of Medicine and Health Sciences

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**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 2143 – Health care professional student loan repayment program**  
**House Human Services Committee**  
**Representative Robin Weisz, Chairman**  
February 27, 2019

Chairman Weisz and Members of the House Human Services Committee:

I am Holly Johnson, Licensed Board Certified Behavior Analyst, President for the North Dakota Association for Behavior Analysis (NDABA), and an appointed member of the ND Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Task Force. I am based out of the Minot, and provide services ranging from Devils Lake to Williston, south to Bismarck, and as far east as New Rockford; delivering services in 14 ND counties identified as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas by the ND Center for Rural Health. I am currently the sole traveling Behavior Analyst (BA) in those areas. I consult with families, schools, and private providers serving people with complex behavioral needs. I have worked collaboratively with individuals, their caregivers, and their teams of professionals in behavioral assessment, skills training, and integrated staff interventions for clients with acute and chronic mental illness (e.g., mood, anxiety, personality, and psychotic disorders) as well as acute and chronic medical illness (e.g., severe seizure disorders, rare chromosomal abnormalities, feeding disorders and post-surgical rehabilitation), which occur comorbidly with developmental and/or intellectual disability.

In a letter to Governor Burgum dated November 19, 2018, the ND ASD Task Force provided the following recommendation for the 2019-2021 Budget; however, this recommendation came after the DDoH budget was finalized for the next biennium. This recommendation, in reference to the 'Workforce to Provide Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Services,' was stated as follows:

“Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an evidence-based type of therapy that focuses on improving specific behavior such as social skills and communication. ABA services must be overseen by a licensed applied behavior analyst who has passed the national certification test through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) and is licensed through the ND Board of Psychological Examiners.” “The number of applied behavior analysts in the state is inadequate to meet the demands for applied behavior analysis services for children with ASD.

One solution to increase the applied behavior analyst workforce is to increase funding for the Department of Health’s Health Care Professional Student Loan Repayment Program, and to specifically add applied behavior analysts to the list of eligible behavioral health professionals. The task force recommends an additional eight slots designated for applied behavior analysts. It would be helpful to add slots specifically for them, otherwise they would be competing with other behavioral health professionals for slots, which would likely not help the workforce issues.”

Under the current language in SB 2143, a “behavioral health professional means an individual who practices in the behavioral health field and is:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1) A licensed addiction counselor;    | *the number of licenses was unavailable* |
| (2) A licensed professional counselor; | *there are 511 licensed in ND*           |
| (3) A licensed social worker;          | *there are 2,485 licensed in ND*         |
| (4) A registered nurse; or,            | *there are 14,892 licensed in ND*        |

(5) A specialty practice registered nurse.” \*there are 4 licensed in ND\*

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Equally crucial, as to evidence the importance of adding BAs and additional funding to this piece of legislation, is that as of 10-24-2018 there were 263 Licensed Psychologists, according to the ND State Board of Psychological Examiners (NDSBPE). ‘Clinical Psychologists’ are currently a recognized profession in this program and have the same regulatory body as BAs in ND. Two of the four regulatory board websites have this program listed on their home webpage, which is likely an important recruitment tool. This student loan repayment program is available to many adjacent behavioral health professions, and BAs should be included.

The demand for BAs in ND greatly exceeds the supply, especially in rural and remote areas of the state identified as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas. I entered this profession in 2010, when there were only three BAs in the entire state. It was a core value for me then, and remains a core value, to provide services to the underserved regions and rural areas of the state. As of the end of 2018, there are approximately 30 licensed BAs (27 are BCBA) in North Dakota. I applied for this very student loan repayment program in March of 2018 and was automatically denied because my profession not being included in the language of recognized behavioral health professions. I also supervise BA graduate students. Of the nine graduate students I’ve provided fieldwork supervision for, and who lived in ND during their study, four of them have left to pursue better job opportunities (e.g., more pay, better incentives, higher insurance reimbursement rates, and loan repayment programs) in other states (specifically Washington, Michigan, Connecticut, and California). North Dakota needs well over 100 BAs to just meet the capacity needs of children in our state, and many more for the adult population.

In summary, please consider adding language to SB 2143 for BAs to be considered a recognized profession and consider the ND ASD Task Force recommended eight slots specific for BAs with including additional funding of this program. It is imperative to include language for BAs to this student loan repayment program. It is imperative to include BAs as recognized behavioral health professionals. It is imperative to include our profession in order to retain and entice more professionals to this state. It is imperative to include our profession in order to better serve the remote, rural, and underserved regions who lack BAs as an option for their behavioral health needs.

This concludes my testimony. Additional attachments are BAs demographics across ND, and BA growth in ND and national growth. Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony. If I can be of assistance during this time of deliberation, please contact me at [holly.johnson.bcba@outlook.com](mailto:holly.johnson.bcba@outlook.com).

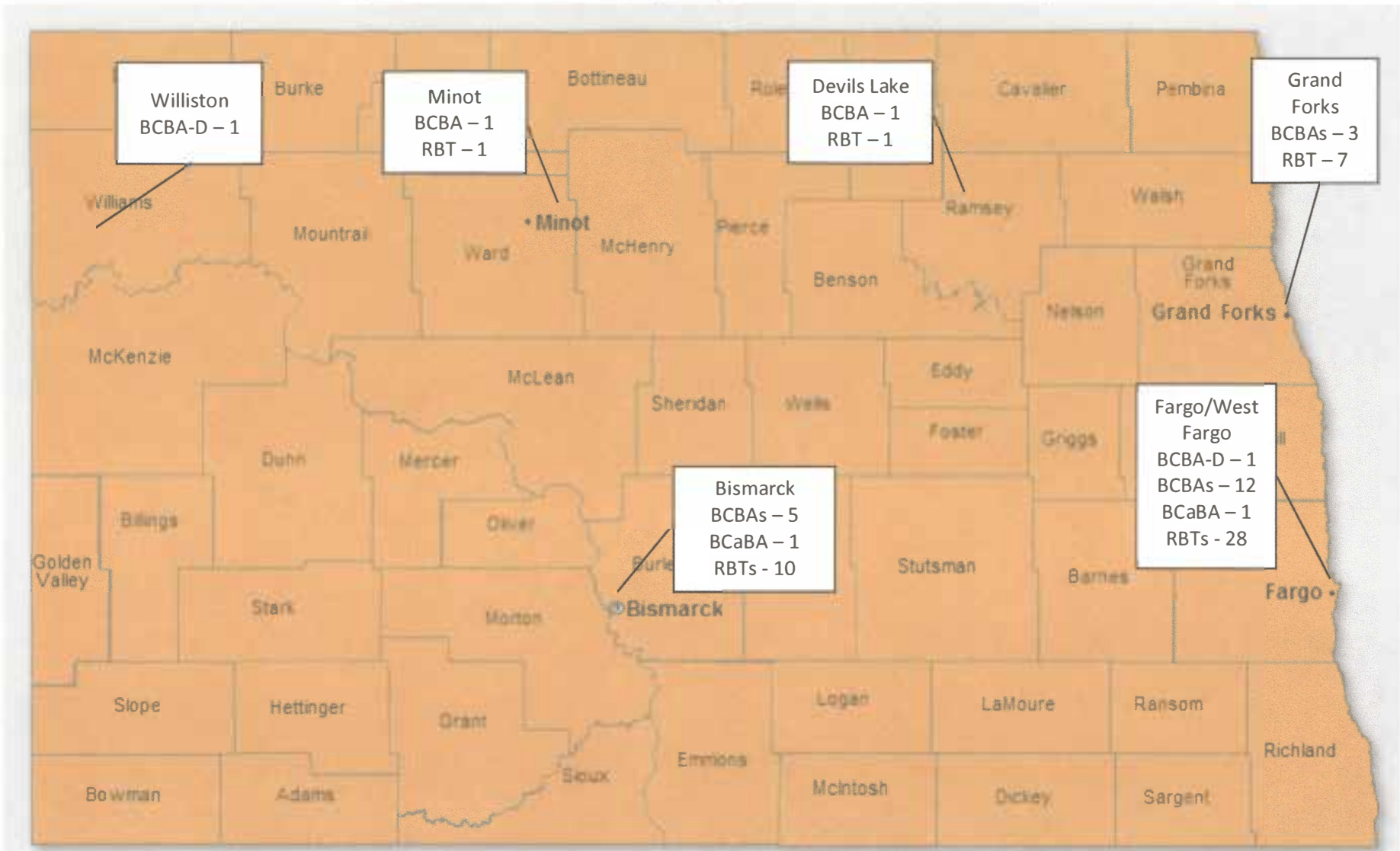
Sincerely,

Holly Johnson, MS, BCBA, LABA  
Board Certified Behavior Analyst #1-14-15198  
ND Licensed Applied Behavior Analyst #L15

All opinion expressed here is my own. These opinions in no way represent the Department of Human Services or the Life Skills and Transition Center, all of which I am actively involved with, adding to my unique perspective contained in this testimony.

RBT – Registered Behavior Technician, BCaBA – Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst, BCBA – Board Certified Behavior Analyst, BCBA-D – Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral  
Holly Johnson – Testimony for SB 2143

North Dakota Behavior Analysis Service Provider Summary			
RBTs	BCaBAs	BCBAs	BCBA-Ds
58	2	27	2

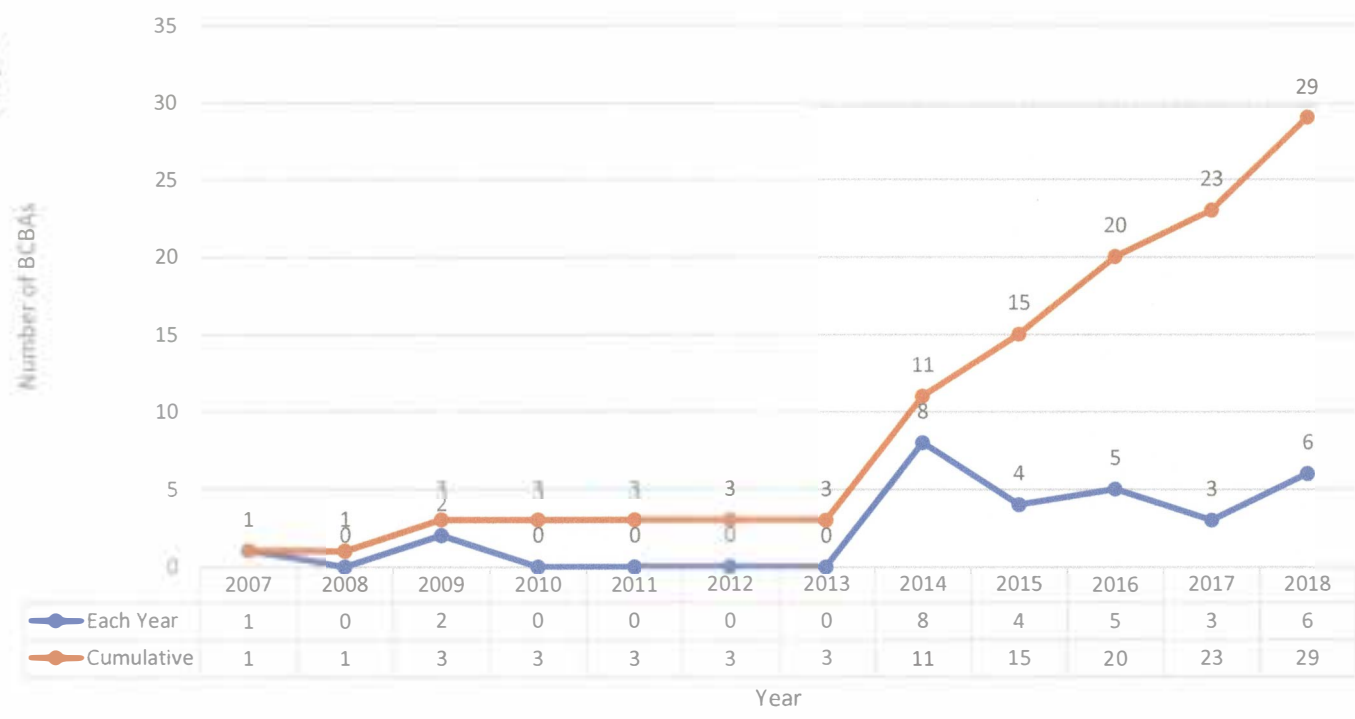


	Bismarck	Devils Lake	Fargo	Grand Forks	Harwood	Hazen	Jamestown	Kindred	Minot	Streeter	Surrey	Valley City	Wahpeton	West Fargo	Williston	Wilton
BCBA-Ds														1	1	
BCBAs	5	1	11	3		1	2		1			1	1	1		
BCaBAs	1		1													
RBTs	10	1	21	7	1	1	5	1	1	1	1			7		1

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Number of Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) in ND by Year



BCBA: Overall Certificants per Year

