

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1168**

Introduced by

Industry, Business and Labor Committee

(At the request of the Commissioner of Insurance)

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact section 26.1-36.4-03.1, relating to preexisting condition  
2 provisions; to amend and reenact sections 26.1-08-01, 26.1-08-04, 26.1-08-06, 26.1-08-06.1,  
3 26.1-08-07, 26.1-08-12, subsection 3 of section 26.1-08-13, sections 26.1-36.3-01,  
4 26.1-36.3-05, 26.1-36.3-06, 26.1-36.4-03, 26.1-36.4-04, and 26.1-36.4-05 of the North Dakota  
5 Century Code, relating to the comprehensive health association of North Dakota, small group  
6 health insurance, and individual health insurance; to repeal section 26.1-08-05, relating to the  
7 comprehensive health association of North Dakota; to provide an effective date; and to declare  
8 an emergency.

9 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

10 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-08-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 amended and reenacted as follows:

12 **26.1-08-01. Definitions.** In this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise  
13 requires:

- 14 1. "Association" means the association created by section 26.1-08-03.
- 15 2. "Association plan" means insurance policy coverage offered by the association  
16 through the lead carrier.
- 17 3. "Association plan premium" means the charge for membership in the association  
18 plan based on the benefits provided in section ~~26.1-08-05~~ or 26.1-08-06 and  
19 determined pursuant to section 26.1-08-08.
- 20 4. "Eligible person" means ~~an~~ either:
  - 21 a. An individual who has been a resident of this state for a period of six months  
22 and meets the enrollment requirements of section 26.1-08-12; ; or
  - 23 b. An individual who is currently a resident of North Dakota, and has had  
24 eighteen months of qualifying previous coverage as defined in section

1                   26.1-36.3-01, the most recent of which is coverage under a group health  
2                   benefit plan, governmental plan, or church plan, as those terms are defined in  
3                   section 26.1-36.3-01. The individual must apply for coverage under this  
4                   chapter within ninety days of the termination of the qualifying previous  
5                   coverage, and cannot be eligible for coverage under a group health benefit  
6                   plan, medicare, medicaid, or have other health insurance coverage.

7           5. "Health benefits" means benefits offered on an indemnity or prepaid basis which  
8           pay the costs of or provide medical, surgical, or hospital care or, if selected by the  
9           eligible person, chiropractic care.

10          6. ~~"Insurance company" means a company or organization operating pursuant to~~  
11          ~~chapter 26.1-17, 26.1-18, or 26.1-36 and offering or selling accident and health~~  
12          ~~insurance policies or health care or health service contracts. The term does not~~  
13          ~~include a health service corporation operating under chapter 26.1-17 which does~~  
14          ~~not write hospital or medical service contracts. "Insurer" means any insurance~~  
15          company, nonprofit health service organization, fraternal benefit society, or health  
16          maintenance organization selling group or individual hospital, medical, surgical, or  
17          major medical coverage.

18          7. "Lead carrier" means the insurance company selected by the association to  
19          administer the association plan.

20          8. "Plan of health coverage" means any plan or combination of plans of coverage,  
21          including combinations of individual policies or coverage under a nonprofit health  
22          service plan.

23          9. "Policy" means insurance, health care plan, or nonprofit health service plan  
24          contracts providing benefits for hospital, surgical, and medical care. Policy does  
25          not include coverage which is (a) limited to disability or income protection  
26          coverage, (b) automobile medical payment coverage, (c) supplemental to liability  
27          insurance, (d) designed solely to provide payment on a per diem basis, daily  
28          indemnity, or non-expense-incurred basis, or (e) credit accident and health  
29          insurance.

30          10. "Qualified plan" means those health benefit plans certified by the commissioner as  
31          providing the minimum benefits required by section ~~26.1-08-05~~, 26.1-08-06 for a

1           qualified comprehensive plan, or section 26.1-08-06.1 for a qualified medicare  
2           supplement plan, or the actuarial equivalent of those benefits other plan as  
3           developed by the board and certified by the commissioner as complying with the  
4           Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996 [Pub. L. 104-191; 110 Stat. 1936; 29  
5           U.S.C. 1181 et seq.].

6           **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-08-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8           **26.1-08-04. ~~Minimum benefits of association~~ Association plan.** The association  
9 ~~through its plan shall offer policies that provide at least the benefits of a number one and two~~  
10 ~~qualified plan A and qualified plan B and a qualified medicare extended plan "qualified plans"~~  
11 as defined in section 26.1-08-01.

12           **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-08-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
13 amended and reenacted as follows:

14           **26.1-08-06. Minimum benefits of a qualified plan B.**

15           1. A plan of health coverage is a ~~number two~~ qualified comprehensive plan B and is  
16 available to individuals not eligible for medicare if it otherwise meets the  
17 requirements established by chapter 26.1-36, and the other laws of the state,  
18 whether or not the policy is issued in this state, and meets or exceeds the following  
19 minimum standards:

20           a. The minimum benefits for covered individuals must, subject to this  
21 subdivision, be equal to at least eighty percent of the cost of covered services  
22 in excess of an annual deductible which must not be less than five hundred  
23 dollars per person. The coverage must include a limitation of three thousand  
24 dollars per person on the total annual out-of-pocket expenses for services  
25 covered under this subsection. The coverage may be subject to a maximum  
26 lifetime benefit of not less than one million dollars.

27           b. Covered expenses must be the usual and customary charges for the following  
28 services and articles when prescribed by a physician:

29           (1) Hospital services.

- 1                   (2) Professional services for the diagnosis or treatment of injuries, illness,  
2                   or conditions, other than outpatient mental or dental, which are  
3                   rendered by a physician or at a physician's direction.
- 4                   (3) Drugs requiring a physician's prescription.
- 5                   (4) Services of a nursing home for not more than one hundred twenty days  
6                   in a year if the services commence within fourteen days following  
7                   confinement of at least three days in a hospital for the same condition.
- 8                   (5) Service of a home health agency up to a maximum of ~~one hundred~~  
9                   ~~eighty~~ two hundred seventy visits per year.
- 10                  (6) Use of radium or other radioactive materials.
- 11                  (7) Oxygen.
- 12                  (8) Anesthetics.
- 13                  (9) Prostheses.
- 14                  (10) Rental or purchase, as appropriate, of durable medical equipment.
- 15                  (11) Diagnostic X-rays and laboratory tests.
- 16                  (12) Oral surgery for partially or completely unerupted impacted teeth, a  
17                  tooth root without the extraction of the entire tooth, or the gums and  
18                  tissues of the mouth when not performed in connection with the  
19                  extraction or repair of teeth.
- 20                  (13) Services of a physical therapist.
- 21                  (14) Transportation provided by licensed ambulance service to the nearest  
22                  facility qualified to treat the condition.
- 23                  (15) Substance abuse and mental disorders as outlined in sections  
24                  26.1-36-08 and 26.1-36-09.
- 25                  c. Covered expenses must include, at the option of the eligible person, the usual  
26                  and customary charges for professional services rendered by a chiropractor  
27                  and for services and articles prescribed by a chiropractor for which an  
28                  additional premium may be charged.
- 29                  d. Covered expenses for the services or articles specified in this subsection do  
30                  not include:

- 1                   (1) Any charge for any care or for any injury or disease either arising out of  
2                   an injury in the course of employment and subject to a workers'  
3                   compensation or similar law, for which benefits are payable without  
4                   regard to fault under coverage statutorily required to be contained in  
5                   any motor vehicle or other liability insurance policy or equivalent  
6                   self-insurance, or for which benefits are payable under another accident  
7                   and health insurance policy or medicare.
- 8                   (2) Any charge for treatment for cosmetic purposes other than surgery for  
9                   the repair of an injury or birth defect.
- 10                  (3) Any charge for travel other than transportation provided by licensed  
11                  ambulance service to the nearest facility qualified to treat the condition.
- 12                  (4) Any charge for confinement in a private room to the extent it is in  
13                  excess of the institution's charge for its most common semiprivate  
14                  room, unless the private room is prescribed as medically necessary by  
15                  a physician.
- 16                  (5) That part of any charge for services or articles rendered or prescribed  
17                  by a physician, dentist, chiropractor, or other health care personnel  
18                  which exceeds the prevailing charge in the locality where the service is  
19                  provided.
- 20                  (6) Any charge for services or articles the provision of which is not within  
21                  the scope of authorized practice of the institution or individual rendering  
22                  the services or articles.
- 23                  (7) Care which is primarily for custodial or domiciliary purposes which  
24                  would not qualify as eligible services under medicare.
- 25                  (8) Any charge for organ transplants unless prior approval is received from  
26                  the board of directors of the comprehensive health association.
- 27                  2. ~~A plan of health coverage is a number one qualified plan B if it meets the~~  
28                  ~~requirements established by the laws of this state and provides for the payment of~~  
29                  ~~at least eighty percent of the covered expenses required by this section in excess~~  
30                  ~~of a deductible which must not be less than one thousand dollars per person. The~~  
31                  ~~coverage must include a limitation of three thousand dollars per person on the total~~

1           ~~annual out-of-pocket expenses for services covered under subsection 1. The~~  
2           ~~qualified plans offered under this chapter must include a choice of deductibles.~~  
3           Coverage may be subject to a maximum lifetime benefit of not less than one million  
4           dollars.

5           **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-08-06.1 of the North Dakota Century Code  
6 is amended and reenacted as follows:

7           **26.1-08-06.1. ~~Minimum benefits of a qualified~~ Qualified medicare extended**  
8 **supplement plan.** ~~A qualified plan of health coverage must be established for eligible persons~~  
9 ~~who are enrolled under title 1, part 1 of Public Law 89-97 and amendments thereto (Health~~  
10 ~~Insurance for the Aged Act), known as medicare. The plan of health care coverage must~~  
11 ~~supplement medicare part A and medicare part B and must provide for benefits consisting of~~  
12 ~~that portion of medicare eligible expenses which are not paid by medicare part A and medicare~~  
13 ~~part B. The plan of health coverage must provide benefits for medicare deductible and~~  
14 ~~coinsurance amounts for medicare eligible expenses to the extent recognized as reasonable by~~  
15 ~~medicare part A and medicare part B. No benefits may be provided for expenses that are not~~  
16 ~~medicare eligible expenses. A qualified medicare supplement plan is a medicare supplement~~  
17 ~~plan F. This plan is available to individuals who are eligible for medicare by reason of age or~~  
18 ~~disability.~~

19           **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-08-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
20 amended and reenacted as follows:

21           **26.1-08-07. ~~Certification of qualified~~ Approval of plans.** ~~Upon application by the~~  
22 ~~association or the lead carrier for certification of a plan of health coverage as a qualified plan for~~  
23 ~~the purposes of this chapter, the commissioner shall make a determination within ninety days~~  
24 ~~as to whether the plan is qualified. All plans of health coverage must be labeled as "qualified~~  
25 ~~plan A", "qualified plan B", or "nonqualified" on the front of the policy or evidence of insurance.~~  
26 ~~All qualified plans must indicate whether they are number one or two coverage plans. The~~  
27 ~~association or the lead carrier shall file with the commissioner all plans to be offered under this~~  
28 ~~chapter. The commissioner shall approve or disapprove any form within sixty days of receipt.~~

29           **SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-08-12 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
30 amended and reenacted as follows:

31           **26.1-08-12. Enrollment by eligible person.**

- 1           1.    The association plan must be open for enrollment by eligible persons. A person is  
2                    eligible and may enroll in the plan by submission of an application to the lead  
3                    carrier. The application must provide:
  - 4                    a.    The name, address, and age of the applicant, and length of applicant's  
5                            residence in this state.
  - 6                    b.    The name, address, and age of spouse and children, if any, if they are to be  
7                            insured.
  - 8                    c.    ~~Written~~ For an "eligible person" under subdivision a of subsection 4 of section  
9                            26.1-08-01, written evidence that the applicant has been rejected for accident  
10                            and health insurance, or that restrictive riders or a preexisting conditions  
11                            limitation, the effect of which is to reduce substantially coverage from that  
12                            received by a person considered a standard risk, was required, by at least  
13                            one insurance company within six months of the date of the application.
  - 14                    d.    For an "eligible person" under subdivision b of subsection 4 of section  
15                            26.1-08-01, written evidence that the applicant or dependents have had  
16                            eighteen months of qualifying previous coverage as defined in section  
17                            26.1-36.3-01.
  - 18                    e.    A designation of coverage desired.
- 19            2.    Within thirty days of receipt of the application, the lead carrier shall either reject the  
20                    application for failing to comply with the requirements of subsection 1 or forward  
21                    the eligible person a notice of acceptance and billing information. Insurance is  
22                    effective immediately upon receipt of the first month's association plan premium,  
23                    and is retroactive to the date of the application, if the applicant otherwise complies  
24                    with this chapter.
- 25            3.    An eligible person may not purchase more than one policy from the association  
26                    plan.
- 27            4.    A person who obtains coverage pursuant to this section may not be covered for  
28                    maternity during the first two hundred seventy days or any other preexisting  
29                    condition during the first one hundred eighty days of coverage under the  
30                    association plan if the person was diagnosed or treated for that condition during  
31                    the ninety days immediately preceding the date of the application. Any person with

1 coverage through the association plan due to a catastrophic condition or major  
2 illness who is also pregnant at the time of application is eligible for maternity  
3 benefits after the first one hundred eight days of coverage. This subsection does  
4 not apply to a person receiving nonelective procedures who has lost dependent  
5 status under a parent's or guardian's policy that has been in effect for the  
6 twelve-month period immediately preceding the filing of an application or to a  
7 person who is treated by nonelective procedures for a congenital or genetic  
8 disease. No preexisting condition exclusion or waiting period may be imposed  
9 under this subsection, or in the terms of the coverage obtained under this chapter,  
10 on an "eligible person" under subdivision b of subsection 4 of section 26.1-08-01.  
11 For an "eligible person" under subdivision a of subsection 4 of section 26.1-08-01,  
12 any preexisting condition exclusion must be reduced by the aggregate period of  
13 qualifying previous coverage in the same manner as provided in subsection 3 of  
14 section 26.1-36.3-06.

15 **SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 3 of section 26.1-08-13 of the North Dakota  
16 Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

17 3. When the lifetime maximum benefit amount has been reached under ~~subsection 2~~  
18 ~~of section 26.1-08-05~~ or subsection 2 of section 26.1-08-06.

19 **SECTION 8. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-36.3-01 of the North Dakota Century Code  
20 is amended and reenacted as follows:

21 **26.1-36.3-01. Definitions.** As used in this chapter and section 26.1-36-37.2, unless  
22 the context otherwise requires:

23 1. "Actuarial certification" means a written statement by a member of the American  
24 academy of actuaries, or other individual acceptable to the commissioner of  
25 insurance, that a small employer carrier is in compliance with section 26.1-36.3-04,  
26 based upon the person's examination of the small employer carrier, including a  
27 review of the appropriate records and the actuarial assumptions and methods used  
28 by the small employer carrier in establishing premium rates for applicable health  
29 benefit plans.



- 1           2. "Affiliate" or "affiliated" means any entity or person who directly or indirectly  
2           through one or more intermediaries, controls or is controlled by, or is under  
3           common control with, a specified entity or person.
- 4           3. "Association" means, with respect to health insurance coverage offered in this  
5           state, an association that:
- 6           a. Has been actively in existence for at least five years;  
7           b. Has been formed and maintained in good faith for purposes other than  
8           obtaining insurance;  
9           c. Does not condition membership in the association on any health  
10           status-related factor relating to an individual, including an employee or  
11           dependent of an employee;  
12           d. Makes health insurance coverage offered through the association available to  
13           all members regardless of any health status-related factor relating to the  
14           members, or individuals eligible for coverage through a member; and  
15           e. Does not make health insurance coverage offered through the association  
16           available other than in connection with a member of the association.
- 17           4. "Base premium rate" means, for each class of business as to a rating period, the  
18           lowest premium rate charged or that could have been charged under the rating  
19           system for that class of business by the small employer carrier to small employers  
20           with similar case characteristics for health benefit plans with the same or similar  
21           coverage.
- 22           4. 5. "Basic health benefit plan" means a lower cost health benefit plan developed under  
23           section 26.1-36.3-08.
- 24           5. 6. "Board" means the board of directors of the program established under section  
25           26.1-36.3-07.
- 26           6. ~~"Carrier" means any entity that provides health insurance in this state. The term~~  
27           ~~includes an insurance company, nonprofit health service organization, fraternal~~  
28           ~~benefit society, health maintenance organization, and any other entity providing a~~  
29           ~~plan of health insurance or health benefits subject to state insurance regulation.~~
- 30           7. "Case characteristics" means demographic or other objective characteristics of a  
31           small employer that are considered by the small employer carrier in the

- 1 determination of premium rates for the small employer; however, claim experience,  
2 health status, and duration of coverage are not case characteristics.
- 3 8. "Church plan" has the meaning given the term under section 3(33) of the  
4 Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [Pub. L. 93-406; 88 Stat. 829;  
5 29 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.].
- 6 9. "Class of business" means all or a separate grouping of small employers  
7 established under section 26.1-36.3-03.
- 8 ~~9.~~ 10. "Committee" means the health benefit plan committee created under section  
9 26.1-36.3-08.
- 10 ~~10.~~ 11. "Control" is as defined in section 26.1-10-01.
- 11 ~~11.~~ 12. "Dependent" means a spouse, an unmarried child, including a dependent of an  
12 unmarried child, under the age of twenty-two, an unmarried child who is a full-time  
13 student under the age of twenty-six and who is financially dependent upon the  
14 enrollee, and an unmarried child, including a dependent of an unmarried child, of  
15 any age who is medically certified as disabled and dependent upon the enrollee as  
16 set forth in section 26.1-36-22.
- 17 ~~12.~~ 13. "Eligible employee" means an employee who works on a full-time basis and has a  
18 normal workweek of thirty or more hours. The term includes a sole proprietor, a  
19 partner of a partnership, and an independent contractor, if the sole proprietor,  
20 partner, or independent contractor is included as an employee under a health  
21 benefit plan of a small employer. The term does not include an employee who  
22 works on a part-time, temporary, or substitute basis.
- 23 ~~13.~~ 14. "Enrollee" means a person covered under a small employer health benefit plan.
- 24 ~~14.~~ 15. "Established geographic service area" means a geographic area, as approved by  
25 the commissioner of insurance and based on the carrier's certificate of authority to  
26 transact insurance in this state, within which the carrier is authorized to provide  
27 coverage.
- 28 16. "Governmental plan" means an employee welfare benefit plan as defined in  
29 section 3(32) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [Pub. L.  
30 93-406; 88 Stat. 829; 29 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.] or any federal government plan.

1        17.    "Group health benefit plan" means an employee welfare benefit plan as defined in  
2                    section 3(1) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [Pub. L.  
3                    93-406; 88 Stat. 829; 29 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.] to the extent that the plan provides  
4                    medical care as defined in this section and including items and services paid for as  
5                    medical care to employees or their dependents as defined under the terms of the  
6                    plan directly or through insurance, reimbursement, or otherwise. For purposes of  
7                    this Act:

8                    a.    A plan, fund, or program that would not be, but for this section, an employee  
9                    welfare benefit plan and which is established or maintained by a partnership,  
10                   to the extent that the plan, fund, or program provides medical care, including  
11                   items and services paid for as medical care, to present or former partners in  
12                   the partnership, or to their dependents, as defined under the terms of the  
13                   plan, fund, or program, directly or through insurance, reimbursement, or  
14                   otherwise, must be treated as an employee welfare benefit plan which is a  
15                   group health benefit plan;

16                   b.    In the case of a group health benefit plan, the term "employer" also includes  
17                   the partnership in relationship to any partner; and

18                   c.    In the case of a group health benefit plan, the term "participant" also includes:  
19                   (1)    In connection with a group health benefit plan maintained by a  
20                   partnership, an individual who is a partner in relation to the partnership;  
21                   or  
22                   (2)    In connection with a group health benefit plan maintained by a  
23                   self-employed individual, under which one or more employees are  
24                   participants, the self-employed individual, if the individual is, or may  
25                   become, eligible to receive benefits under the plan or the beneficiaries  
26                   may be eligible to receive any benefit.

27        ~~45.~~ 18.    a.    "Health benefit plan" means any hospital or medical or major medical policy,  
28                   certificate, or subscriber contract. ~~The term does not include accident only,~~  
29                   ~~credit, dental, vision, medicare supplement, long term care, or disability~~  
30                   ~~income insurance, coverage issued as a supplement to liability insurance,~~

- 1                   ~~worker's compensation or similar insurance, or automobile medical payment~~  
2                   ~~insurance.~~
- 3            b. "Health benefit plan" does not include one or more, or any combination of, the  
4                   following:
- 5                   (1) Coverage only for accident, or disability income insurance, or any  
6                   combination thereof;
- 7                   (2) Coverage issued as a supplement to liability insurance;
- 8                   (3) Liability insurance, including general liability insurance and automobile  
9                   liability insurance;
- 10                  (4) Workers' compensation or similar insurance;
- 11                  (5) Automobile medical payment insurance;
- 12                  (6) Credit only insurance;
- 13                  (7) Coverage for onsite medical clinics; and
- 14                  (8) Other similar insurance coverage, specified in federal regulations,  
15                  under which benefits for medical care are secondary or incidental to  
16                  other insurance.
- 17            c. "Health benefit plan" does not include the following benefits if they are  
18                   provided under a separate policy, certificate, or contract of insurance or are  
19                   otherwise not an integral part of the plan:
- 20                   (1) Limited scope dental or vision benefits;
- 21                   (2) Benefits for long-term care, nursing home care, home health care,  
22                   community-based care, or any combination thereof; or
- 23                   (3) Such other similar, limited benefits as are specified in federal  
24                   regulations.
- 25            d. "Health benefit plan" does not include the following benefits if the benefits are  
26                   provided under a separate policy, certificate, or contract of insurance, there is  
27                   no coordination between the provision of the benefits, and any exclusion of  
28                   benefits under any group health benefit plan maintained by the same plan  
29                   sponsor, and the benefits are paid with respect to an event without regard to  
30                   whether benefits are provided with respect to such an event under any group  
31                   health plan maintained by the same plan sponsor:

- 1                   (1) Coverage only for specified disease or illness; or  
2                   (2) Hospital indemnity or other fixed indemnity insurance.  
3           e. "Health benefit plan" does not include the following if offered as a separate  
4           policy, certificate, or contract of insurance:  
5                   (1) Medicare supplemental health insurance as defined under section  
6                   1882(g)(1) of the Social Security Act;  
7                   (2) Coverage supplemental to the coverage provided under 10 U.S.C. 55;  
8                   and  
9                   (3) Similar supplemental coverage provided under a group health plan.  
10          b. f. ~~"Health benefit plan" does not include~~ A carrier offering a policy or certificate  
11           of specified disease, hospital confinement indemnity, or limited benefit health  
12           insurance, if the carrier offering that policy or certificate shall comply with the  
13           following:  
14                   (1) ~~Files~~ File with the commissioner of insurance on or before March first of  
15                   each year a certification that contains:  
16                           (a) A statement from the carrier certifying that the policy or certificate  
17                           is being offered and marketed as supplemental health insurance  
18                           and not as a substitute for hospital or medical expense insurance  
19                           or major medical expense insurance.  
20                           (b) A summary description of the policy or certificate, including the  
21                           average annual premium rates, or range of premium rates in  
22                           cases where premiums vary by age, gender, or other factors,  
23                           charged for the policy and certificate in this state.  
24                   (2) When the policy or certificate is offered for the first time in this state on  
25                   or after August 1, 1993, files with the commissioner the information and  
26                   statement required in paragraph 1 at least thirty days before the date  
27                   the policy or certificate is issued or delivered in this state.  
28          19. "Health carrier" or carrier means any entity that provides health insurance in this  
29           state. For purposes of this chapter, health carrier includes an insurance company,  
30           a prepaid limited health service corporation, a fraternal benefit society, a health  
31           maintenance organization, nonprofit health service corporation, and any other

1                    entity providing a plan of health insurance or health benefits subject to state  
2                    insurance regulation.

3            20.   "Health status-related factor" means any of the following factors:

- 4                    a.   Health status;
- 5                    b.   Medical condition, including both physical and mental illness;
- 6                    c.   Claims experience;
- 7                    d.   Receipt of health care;
- 8                    e.   Medical history;
- 9                    f.   Genetic information;
- 10                   g.   Evidence of insurability, including condition arising out of acts of domestic  
11                    violence; or
- 12                   h.   Disability.

13    46. 21.   "Index rate" means, for each class of business as to a rating period for small  
14                    employers with similar case characteristics, the arithmetic average of the  
15                    applicable base premium rate and the corresponding highest premium rate.

16    47. 22.   "Late enrollee" means an eligible employee or dependent who requests enrollment  
17                    in a health benefit plan of a small employer following the initial enrollment period  
18                    during which the individual is entitled to enroll under the terms of the health benefit  
19                    plan, provided that the initial enrollment period is a period of at least thirty days.  
20                    An eligible employee or dependent may not be considered a late enrollee,  
21                    however, if:

- 22                    a.   The individual:
  - 23                            (1)   Was covered under qualifying previous coverage at the time of the
  - 24                                       initial enrollment;
  - 25                            (2)   Lost coverage under qualifying previous coverage as a result of
  - 26                                       termination of employment or eligibility, the involuntary termination of
  - 27                                       the qualifying previous coverage, death of a spouse, or divorce; and
  - 28                            (3)   Requests enrollment within ninety days after termination of the
  - 29                                       qualifying previous coverage.

- 1           b.    The individual is employed by an employer that offers multiple health benefit  
2           plans and the individual elects a different plan during an open enrollment  
3           period.
- 4           c.    A court has ordered coverage be provided for a spouse or minor or dependent  
5           child under a covered employee's health benefit plan and request for  
6           enrollment is made within thirty days after issuance of the court order.
- 7           d.    The individual had coverage under a Consolidated Omnibus Budget  
8           Reconciliation Act [Pub. L. 99-272; 100 Stat. 82] continuation provision and  
9           the coverage under that provision was exhausted.
- 10        23.   "Medical care" means amounts paid for:
- 11           a.    The diagnosis, care, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, or  
12           amounts paid for the purpose of affecting any structure or function of the  
13           body;
- 14           b.    Transportation primarily for and essential to medical care referred to in  
15           subdivision a; and
- 16           c.    Insurance covering medical care referred to in subdivisions a and b.
- 17        24.   "Network plan" means health insurance coverage offered by a health carrier under  
18           which the financing and delivery of medical care, including items and services paid  
19           for as medical care, are provided, in whole or in part, through a defined set of  
20           providers under contract with the carrier.
- 21        ~~48.~~ 25.   "New business premium rate" means, for each class of business as to a rating  
22           period, the lowest premium rate charged or offered, or which could have been  
23           charged or offered, by the small employer carrier to small employers with similar  
24           case characteristics for newly issued health benefit plans with the same or similar  
25           coverage.
- 26        ~~49.~~ 26.   "Plan of operation" means the plan of operation of the program established under  
27           section 26.1-36.3-07.
- 28        27.   "Plan sponsor" has the meaning given the term under section 3(16)(B) of the  
29           Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [Pub. L. 93-406; 88 Stat. 829;  
30           29 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.].

- 1    ~~20.~~ 28.    "Premium" means money paid by a small employer and eligible employees as a  
2                    condition of receiving coverage from a small employer carrier, including any fees or  
3                    other contributions associated with the health benefit plan.
- 4    ~~24.~~ 29.    "Producer" means insurance agent or insurance broker.
- 5    ~~22.~~ 30.    "Program" means the state small employer carrier reinsurance program created  
6                    under section 26.1-36.3-07.
- 7    ~~23.~~ 31.    "Qualifying previous coverage" and "qualifying existing coverage" mean, with  
8                    respect to an individual, health benefits or coverage provided under one or more  
9                    any of the following:
- 10                    a.    ~~Medicare, medicaid, civilian health and medical program for uniformed~~  
11                    ~~services, Indian health services program, or any other similar publicly~~  
12                    ~~sponsored program.~~
- 13                    b.    ~~A health insurance or health benefit arrangement that provides benefits~~  
14                    ~~similar to or exceeding benefits provided under the basic health benefit plan.~~
- 15                    e.    ~~An individual health insurance policy, including coverage issued by a health~~  
16                    ~~maintenance organization, nonprofit health service corporation, and fraternal~~  
17                    ~~benefit society that provides benefits similar to or exceeding the benefits~~  
18                    ~~provided under the basic health benefit plan, provided that the policy has~~  
19                    ~~been in effect for a period of at least one year.~~
- 20                    a.    A group health benefit plan;
- 21                    b.    A health benefit plan;
- 22                    c.    Medicare;
- 23                    d.    Medicaid;
- 24                    e.    Civilian health and medical program for uniformed services;
- 25                    f.    A medical care program of the Indian health service or of a tribal organization;
- 26                    g.    A state health benefit risk pool, including coverage issued under chapter  
27                    26.1-08;
- 28                    h.    A health plan offered under 5 U.S.C. 89;
- 29                    i.    A public health plan as defined in federal regulations; and
- 30                    j.    A health benefit plan under section 5(e) of the Peace Corps Act [Pub. L.  
31                    87-293; 75 Stat. 612; 22 U.S.C. 2504(e)].



1            The term "qualifying previous coverage" does not include coverage of benefits  
2            excepted from the definition of a "health benefit plan" under subsection 18.

3    ~~24.~~ 32. "Rating period" means the calendar period for which premium rates established by  
4            a small employer carrier are assumed to be in effect.

5    ~~25.~~ 33. "Reinsuring carrier" means a small employer carrier which reinsures individuals or  
6            groups with the program.

7    ~~26.~~ 34. "Restricted network provision" means any provision of a health benefit plan that  
8            conditions the payment of benefits, in whole or in part, on the use of health care  
9            providers that have entered into a contractual arrangement with the carrier under  
10           chapters 26.1-17, 26.1-18, and 26.1-47 to provide health care services to covered  
11           individuals.

12   ~~27.~~ 35. "Small employer" means ~~any person that is actively engaged in business that, on~~  
13           ~~at least fifty percent of its working days during the preceding calendar quarter,~~  
14           ~~employed at least three, but no more than twenty five eligible employees, the~~  
15           ~~majority of whom were employed within this state. In determining the number of~~  
16           ~~eligible employees, companies that are affiliated companies, or that are eligible to~~  
17           ~~file a combined tax return for purposes of state taxation, must be considered one~~  
18           ~~employer, in connection with a group health plan with respect to a calendar and a~~  
19           ~~plan year, an employer who employed an average of at least two but not more than~~  
20           fifty eligible employees on business days during the preceding calendar year and  
21           who employs at least two employees on the first day of the plan year.

22   ~~28.~~ 36. "Small employer carrier" means any carrier that offers health benefit plans covering  
23           eligible employees of one or more small employers in this state.

24   ~~29.~~ 37. "Standard health benefit plan" means a health benefit plan developed under  
25           section 26.1-36.3-08.

26            **SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-36.3-05 of the North Dakota Century Code  
27            is amended and reenacted as follows:

28            **26.1-36.3-05. Renewability of coverage.**

29            1. A health benefit plan subject to this chapter and section 26.1-36-37.2 must be  
30            renewable with respect to all eligible employees and dependents, at the option of  
31            the small employer, except for any of the following:

- 1 a. ~~Nonpayment of the required premiums. The plan sponsor has failed to pay~~  
2 ~~premiums or contributions in accordance with the terms of the health benefit~~  
3 ~~plan or the health carrier has not received timely premium payments.~~
- 4 b. ~~Fraud or misrepresentation of the small employer or, with respect to coverage~~  
5 ~~of individual insureds, the insureds or their representatives. The plan sponsor~~  
6 ~~or small employer has performed an act or practice that constitutes fraud or~~  
7 ~~made an intentional misrepresentation of a material fact under the terms of~~  
8 ~~the coverage.~~
- 9 c. Noncompliance with the carrier's minimum participation requirements.
- 10 d. Noncompliance with the carrier's employer contribution requirements.
- 11 e. ~~Repeated misuse of a provider network provision.~~
- 12 f. ~~The small employer carrier electing to nonrenew all of its health benefit plans~~  
13 ~~delivered or issued for delivery to small employers in this state. In that case~~  
14 ~~the carrier shall:~~
- 15 (1) ~~Provide advance notice of its decision not to renew to the commissioner~~  
16 ~~in each state in which it is licensed; and~~
- 17 (2) ~~Provide notice of the decision not to renew coverage to all affected~~  
18 ~~small employers and to the commissioner in each state in which an~~  
19 ~~affected insured individual is known to reside at least one hundred~~  
20 ~~eighty days prior to the nonrenewal of any health benefit plan by the~~  
21 ~~carrier. Notice to the commissioner under this paragraph must be~~  
22 ~~provided at least three working days prior to the notice to the affected~~  
23 ~~small employers.~~
- 24 e. A decision by the small employer carrier to discontinue offering a particular  
25 type of group health benefit plan in the state's small employer market. A type  
26 of health benefit plan may be discontinued by the carrier in that market only if  
27 the carrier:
- 28 (1) Provides advance notice of its decision under this paragraph to the  
29 commissioner in each state in which it is licensed;
- 30 (2) Provides notice of the decision not to renew coverage to all affected  
31 small employers, participants, and beneficiaries, and to the

- 1 commissioner in each state in which an affected insured individual is  
2 known to reside at least one hundred eighty days prior to the  
3 nonrenewal of any health benefit plans by the carrier. Notice to the  
4 commissioner under this subdivision must be provided at least three  
5 working days prior to the notice to the affected small employers and  
6 participants and beneficiaries;
- 7 (3) Offers to each plan sponsor provided the type of group health benefit  
8 plan the option to purchase all other health benefit plans currently being  
9 offered by the carrier to employers in the state; and
- 10 (4) In exercising the option to discontinue the particular type of group  
11 health benefit plan and in offering the option of coverage under  
12 paragraph 3, the carrier acts uniformly without regard to the claims  
13 experience of those sponsors or any health status-related factor relating  
14 to any participants or beneficiaries covered or new participants or  
15 beneficiaries who may become eligible for such coverage.
- 16 f. A decision by the small employer carrier to discontinue offering and to  
17 nonrenew all its health benefit plans delivered or issued for delivery to small  
18 employers in this state. In such a case, the carrier shall:
- 19 (1) Provide advance notice of its decision under this paragraph to the  
20 commissioner in each state in which it is licensed;
- 21 (2) Provide notice of the decision not to renew coverage to all affected  
22 small employers, participants, and beneficiaries, and to the  
23 commissioner in each state in which an affected insured individual is  
24 known to reside at least one hundred eighty days prior to the  
25 nonrenewal of any health benefit plans by the carrier. Notice to the  
26 commissioner under this subdivision shall be provided at least three  
27 working days prior to the notice to the affected small employers and  
28 participants and beneficiaries; and
- 29 (3) Discontinue all health insurance issued or delivered for issuance in the  
30 state's small employer market and not renew coverage under any  
31 health benefit plan issued to a small employer.

- 1           g. In the case of health benefit plans that are made available in the small  
2           employer market only through one or more associations, the membership of  
3           an employer in the association, on the basis of which the coverage is  
4           provided, ceases, but only if the coverage is terminated under this paragraph  
5           uniformly without regard to any health status-related factor relating to any  
6           covered individual.
- 7           ~~g.~~ h. The commissioner finds that the continuation of the coverage would not be in  
8           the best interests of the policyholders or certificate holders or would impair the  
9           carrier's ability to meet its contractual obligations. In this case the  
10          commissioner shall assist affected small employers in finding replacement  
11          coverage.
- 12          2. A small employer carrier that elects not to renew a health benefit plan under  
13          subdivision f of subsection 1 may not write new business in the small employer  
14          market in this state for a period of five years from the date of notice to the  
15          commissioner.
- 16          3. In the case of a small employer carrier doing business in one established  
17          geographic service area of the state, this section only applies to the carrier's  
18          operations in that service area.
- 19          4. A small employer carrier offering through a network plan may not be required to  
20          offer coverage or accept applications pursuant to subsection 1 or 2 in the case of  
21          the following:
- 22               a. To an eligible person who no longer resides, lives, or works in the service  
23               area, or in an area for which the carrier is authorized to do business, but only  
24               if coverage is terminated under this subdivision uniformly without regard to  
25               any health status-related factor; or
- 26               b. To a small employer that no longer has any enrollee in connection with the  
27               plan who lives, resides, or works in the service area of the carrier, or the area  
28               for which the carrier is authorized to do business.
- 29          5. At the time of coverage renewal, a health insurance carrier may modify the health  
30          insurance coverage for a product offered to a group health plan, if for coverage that  
31          is available in such market other than only through one or more bona fide

1           associations, the modification is consistent with state law and effective on a  
2           uniform basis among group health plans with that product.

3           **SECTION 10. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-36.3-06 of the North Dakota Century Code  
4 is amended and reenacted as follows:

5           **26.1-36.3-06. Availability of coverage.**

6           1. a. As a condition of transacting business in this state with small employers,  
7           every small employer carrier shall actively offer small employers ~~at least two~~  
8           ~~health benefit plans. Each small employer carrier shall offer one~~ all health  
9           benefit plans it actively markets to small employers in this state, including a  
10           basic health benefit plan and ~~one~~ a standard health benefit plan.

11           b. (1) A Subject to subdivision a of subsection 1, a small employer carrier  
12           shall issue a basic any health benefit plan or a standard health benefit  
13           plan to any eligible small employer that applies for either the plan and  
14           agrees to make the required premium payments and to satisfy the other  
15           reasonable provisions of the health benefit plan not inconsistent with  
16           this chapter and section 26.1-36-37.2 Act. However, a carrier may not  
17           be required to issue a health benefit plan to a self-employed individual  
18           who is covered by, or is eligible for coverage under, a health benefit  
19           plan offered by an employer.

20           (2) In the case of a small employer carrier that establishes more than one  
21           class of business pursuant to section 26.1-36.3-03, the small employer  
22           carrier shall maintain and issue to eligible small employers all health  
23           benefit plans it actively markets, including at least one basic health  
24           benefit plan and at least one standard health benefit plan in each  
25           established class of business. A small employer carrier may apply  
26           reasonable criteria in determining whether to accept a small employer  
27           into a class of business if the criteria are not intended to discourage or  
28           prevent acceptance of small employers applying for a basic or standard  
29           health benefit plan, are not related to the health status or claim  
30           experience of the small employer, and are applied consistently to all  
31           small employers applying for coverage in the class of business. The

1                   small employer carrier shall provide for the acceptance of all eligible  
2                   small employers into one or more classes of business. This paragraph  
3                   does not apply to a class of business into which the small employer  
4                   carrier is no longer enrolling new small businesses.

5                   e. ~~A small employer is eligible under subdivision b if it employed at least three or~~  
6                   ~~more eligible employees within this state on at least fifty percent of its working~~  
7                   ~~days during the preceding calendar quarter.~~

8                   d. ~~This subsection takes effect one hundred eighty days after the~~  
9                   ~~commissioner's approval of the basic health benefit plan and the standard~~  
10                  ~~health benefit plan developed pursuant to section 26.1-36.3-08; however, if~~  
11                  ~~the small employer health reinsurance program created pursuant to section~~  
12                  ~~26.1-36.3-07 is not yet operative on that date, this section becomes effective~~  
13                  ~~on the date the program begins operation.~~

14                  2. a. A small employer carrier shall file with the commissioner, in a format and  
15                  manner prescribed by the commissioner, the basic health benefit plans and  
16                  the standard health benefit plans to be used by the carrier. A health benefit  
17                  plan filed under this subdivision may be used by a small employer carrier  
18                  beginning sixty days after it is filed unless the commissioner disapproves its  
19                  use.

20                  b. The commissioner after providing notice and an opportunity for a hearing to  
21                  the small employer carrier, may disapprove, at any time, the continued use by  
22                  a small employer carrier of a basic or standard health benefit plan if the plan  
23                  does not meet the requirements of this chapter and section 26.1-36-37.2.

24                  3. Health benefit plans covering small employers must comply with the following:

25                  a. ~~A health benefit plan may not deny, exclude, or limit benefits for a covered~~  
26                  ~~individual for losses incurred more than twelve months following the effective~~  
27                  ~~date of the individual's coverage due to a preexisting condition. A health~~  
28                  ~~benefit plan may not define a preexisting condition more restrictively than~~  
29                  impose a preexisting condition exclusion only if:

30                          (1) ~~A condition for which medical advice, diagnosis, care, or treatment was~~  
31                          ~~recommended or received during the six months immediately preceding~~

1 ~~the effective date of coverage; or~~ The exclusion relates to a condition,  
2 regardless of the cause of the condition, for which medical advice,  
3 diagnosis, care, or treatment was recommended or received within the  
4 six-month period immediately preceding the effective date of coverage;

5 (2) ~~A pregnancy existing on~~ The exclusion extends for a period of not  
6 more than twelve months after the effective date of coverage;

7 (3) The exclusion does not relate to pregnancy as a preexisting condition;  
8 and

9 (4) The exclusion does not treat genetic information as a preexisting  
10 condition in the absence of a diagnosis of a condition related to such  
11 information.

12 b. A small employer carrier shall ~~waive~~ reduce any time period applicable to a  
13 preexisting condition exclusion or limitation period ~~with respect to particular~~  
14 ~~services for the period of time an individual was previously covered by the~~  
15 aggregate of periods the individual was covered by qualifying previous  
16 coverage that provided benefits with respect to the services, if any, if the  
17 qualifying previous coverage was continuous until at least ninety days prior to  
18 the effective date of the new coverage. The period of continuous coverage  
19 may not include a waiting period for the effective date of the new coverage  
20 applied by the employer or the carrier. This subdivision does not preclude  
21 application of an employer waiting period applicable to all new enrollees under  
22 the health benefit plan. Small employer carriers shall credit coverage by  
23 either a standard method or an alternative method. The commissioner shall  
24 adopt rules for crediting coverage under the standard and alternative method.  
25 These rules must be consistent with the Health Insurance Portability Act of  
26 1996 [Pub. L. 104-791; 110 Stat. 1936; 29 U.S.C. 1181 et seq.] and any  
27 federal rules adopted pursuant thereto.

28 c. A health benefit plan may exclude coverage for late enrollees for the greater  
29 of eighteen months or for an eighteen-month preexisting condition exclusion;  
30 however, if both a period of exclusion from coverage and a preexisting  
31 condition exclusion are applicable to a late enrollee, the combined period may

1 not exceed eighteen months from the date the individual enrolls for coverage  
2 under the health benefit plan.

3 d. (1) Except as provided in this subdivision, a small employer carrier shall  
4 apply requirements used to determine whether to provide coverage to a  
5 small employer, including requirements for minimum participation of  
6 eligible employees and minimum employer contributions, uniformly  
7 among all small employers with the same number of eligible employees  
8 who are applying for coverage or receiving coverage from the small  
9 employer carrier.

10 (2) A small employer carrier may vary application of minimum participation  
11 requirements and minimum employer contribution requirements only by  
12 the size of the small employer group.

13 (3) (a) Except as provided in subparagraph b, a small employer carrier,  
14 in applying minimum participation requirements with respect to a  
15 small employer, shall not consider employees or dependents who  
16 have qualifying existing coverage in determining whether the  
17 applicable percentage of participation is met.

18 (b) With respect to a small employer, with ten or fewer eligible  
19 employees, a small employer carrier may consider employees or  
20 dependents who have coverage under another health benefit  
21 plan sponsored by the small employer in applying minimum  
22 participation requirements.

23 (4) A small employer carrier may not increase any requirement for  
24 minimum employee participation or any requirement for minimum  
25 employer contribution applicable to a small employer at any time after  
26 the small employer has been accepted for coverage.

27 e. (1) If a small employer carrier offers coverage to a small employer, the  
28 small employer carrier shall offer coverage to all of the eligible  
29 employees of a small employer and their dependents. A small  
30 employer carrier may not offer coverage only to certain individuals in a



1 small employer group or only to part of the group, except in the case of  
2 late enrollees as provided in subdivision c.

3 (2) Except as permitted under subsection 1 and this subsection, a small  
4 employer carrier may not modify a basic or standard health benefit plan  
5 with respect to a small employer or any eligible employee or dependent  
6 through riders, endorsements, or otherwise, to restrict or exclude  
7 coverage for certain diseases or medical conditions otherwise covered  
8 by the health benefit plan.

9 4. a. A small employer carrier offering coverage through a network plan is not  
10 required to offer coverage or accept applications under subsection 1 to a  
11 small employer if:

12 (1) ~~A The small employer who applies for coverage is not physically~~  
13 ~~located in the carrier's established geographic service area~~ does not  
14 have eligible individuals who live, work, or reside in the service area for  
15 such network plan; or

16 (2) ~~An employee who applies for coverage does not work or reside within~~  
17 ~~the carrier's established geographic service area; or~~ The small  
18 employer does have eligible individuals who live, work, or reside in the  
19 service area for the network plan, but the carrier has demonstrated, if  
20 required, to the commissioner that it will not have the capacity to deliver  
21 services adequately to enrollees of any additional groups because of its  
22 obligations to existing group contractholders and enrollees, and that it is  
23 applying this paragraph uniformly to all employers without regard to the  
24 claims experience of those employers and their employees and their  
25 dependents or any health status-related factor relating to such  
26 employees and dependents.

27 (3) ~~Within an area the small employer carrier reasonably anticipates, and~~  
28 ~~demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commissioner, that, because of~~  
29 ~~its obligations to existing group policyholders and enrollees, it will not~~  
30 ~~have the capacity within its established geographic service area to~~  
31 ~~deliver service adequately to the members of the groups.~~

- 1           b. ~~A small employer carrier that cannot offer coverage pursuant to paragraph 3~~  
2           ~~of subdivision a may not offer coverage in the applicable area to new cases of~~  
3           ~~employer groups with more than twenty five eligible employees or to any~~  
4           ~~small employer groups until the later of one hundred eighty days following~~  
5           ~~each refusal or the date on which the carrier notifies the commissioner that it~~  
6           ~~has regained capacity to deliver services to small employer groups. A small~~  
7           employer carrier, upon denying health insurance coverage in any service area  
8           in accordance with paragraph 2 of subdivision a, may not offer coverage in  
9           the small employer market within the service area for a period of one hundred  
10           eighty days after the date the coverage is denied.
- 11           5. A small employer carrier is not required to provide coverage to small employers  
12           pursuant to subsection 1 for any period of time for which the commissioner  
13           determines that requiring the acceptance of small employers in accordance with  
14           the provisions of subsection 1 would place the small employer carrier in a  
15           financially impaired condition.
- 16           6. This section does not apply to health benefit plans offered by a small employer  
17           carrier if the carrier makes the health benefit plans available in the small employer  
18           market only through one or more associations as defined in subsection 3 of section  
19           26.1-36.3-01.

20           **SECTION 11. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-36.4-03 of the North Dakota Century Code  
21 is amended and reenacted as follows:

- 22           **26.1-36.4-03. Limits on preexisting ~~conditions provisions~~ condition exclusions.**  
23 ~~A policy must provide coverage, with respect to a disease or physical condition of a person~~  
24 ~~which existed prior to the effective date of the person's coverage under the policy, except for a~~  
25 ~~preexisting disease or physical condition that was diagnosed or treated within the six months~~  
26 ~~immediately prior to the effective date of the person's coverage. The limitation may not apply to~~  
27 ~~loss incurred after the end of the twelve month period commencing on the effective date of the~~  
28 ~~person's coverage. An insurer may impose a preexisting condition exclusion only if:~~
- 29           1. The exclusion relates to a condition, regardless of the cause of the condition, for  
30           which medical diagnosis, care, or treatment was recommended or received within  
31           the six-month period ending on the effective date of the person's coverage.

1           2. The exclusion extends for a period of not more than twelve months after the  
2                   effective date of coverage.

3           **SECTION 12.** Section 26.1-36.4-03.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and  
4 enacted as follows:

5           **26.1-36.4-03.1. Additional limits on preexisting condition exclusions.** A group  
6 policy may not impose a preexisting condition exclusion that:

- 7           1. Relates to pregnancy as a preexisting condition.  
8           2. Treats genetic information as a preexisting condition in the absence of a diagnosis  
9                   of a condition related to such information.

10          **SECTION 13. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-36.4-04 of the North Dakota Century Code  
11 is amended and reenacted as follows:

12          **26.1-36.4-04. Portability of insurance policies.** An insurer shall ~~waive~~ reduce any  
13 time period applicable to a preexisting condition, for a policy ~~with respect to particular services~~  
14 ~~for the period of time an individual was previously covered by the aggregate of periods the~~  
15 individual was covered by qualifying previous coverage ~~that provided benefits with respect to~~  
16 ~~the services~~, if the qualifying previous coverage as defined in section 26.1-36.3-01 is  
17 continuous until at least ninety days before the effective date of the new coverage. The period  
18 of continuous coverage may not include a waiting period or the effective date of the new  
19 coverage applied by the insurer. Insurers shall credit coverage in the same manner as  
20 provided by section 26.1-36.3-06 and the rules adopted by the commissioner pursuant thereto.

21          **SECTION 14. AMENDMENT.** Section 26.1-36.4-05 of the North Dakota Century Code  
22 is amended and reenacted as follows:

23          **26.1-36.4-05. Guaranteed renewability of health insurance coverage -**  
24 **Discrimination prohibited.**

- 25          ~~1. An insurer issuing policies under this chapter shall provide for the renewability or~~  
26 ~~continuability of coverage unless:~~  
27           ~~a. The individual or group has failed to pay the required premiums.~~  
28           ~~b. The individual or group has misrepresented information or committed fraud~~  
29           ~~with respect to coverage of the individual or group.~~  
30           ~~e. The group has failed to comply with the insurer's minimum participation~~  
31           ~~requirements.~~

- 1           d. ~~The insurer has elected to nonrenew all of its policies, other than guaranteed~~  
2           ~~renewable individual policies, in this state. In that case the insurer shall:~~
- 3           ~~(1) Provide advance notice of its decision not to renew to the~~  
4           ~~commissioner; and~~
- 5           ~~(2) Provide notice of the decision not to renew coverage to every affected~~  
6           ~~insured and to the commissioner at least one hundred eighty days~~  
7           ~~before the nonrenewal of the policy or contract by the insurer. Notice to~~  
8           ~~the commissioner under this paragraph must be provided at least three~~  
9           ~~business days before notice to an affected insured.~~
- 10          2. ~~An insurer that elects not to renew a policy as required by this section may not~~  
11          ~~write new business in the individual or group market in this state for a period of five~~  
12          ~~years from the date of notice of its intention not to renew.~~
- 13          3. ~~The commissioner may allow an insurer to nonrenew a policy if the commissioner~~  
14          ~~finds that continuation of coverage is not in the best interests of policyholders or it~~  
15          ~~would impair the insurer's ability to meet its contractual obligations. The~~  
16          ~~commissioner shall assist the policyholder in finding replacement coverage.~~
- 17          1. An insurer issuing policies or certificates under this chapter shall provide for the  
18          renewability or continuability of coverage unless:
- 19          a. The individual or group has failed to pay premiums or contributions in  
20          accordance with the terms of the health benefit plan or the health carrier has  
21          not received timely premium payments.
- 22          b. The individual or group has performed an act or practice that constitutes fraud  
23          or made an intentional misrepresentation of a material fact under the terms of  
24          the coverage.
- 25          c. Noncompliance with the carrier's minimum group participation requirements.
- 26          d. Noncompliance with the carrier's employer group contribution requirements.
- 27          e. A decision by the carrier to discontinue offering a particular type of health  
28          insurance coverage in the group or individual market. A type of group health  
29          benefit plan or individual policy may be discontinued by the carrier in that  
30          market only if the carrier:

- 1                   (1) Provides advance notice of its decision under this paragraph to the  
2                   commissioner in each state in which it is licensed;
- 3                   (2) Provides notice of the decision not to renew coverage to all affected  
4                   individuals, employers, participants, beneficiaries, and to the  
5                   commissioner in each state in which an affected insured is known to  
6                   reside at least one hundred eighty days prior to the nonrenewal of any  
7                   health benefit plans by the carrier. Notice to the commissioner under  
8                   this subdivision must be provided at least three working days prior to  
9                   the notice to the affected individuals, employers, participants, and  
10                  beneficiaries;
- 11                  (3) Offers to each affected group or individual the option to purchase all  
12                  other health benefit plans or individual coverage currently being offered  
13                  by the carrier in that market; and
- 14                  (4) In exercising the option to discontinue the particular type of group  
15                  health benefit plan or individual coverage and in offering the option of  
16                  coverage under paragraph 3, the carrier acts uniformly without regard  
17                  to claims experience or any health status-related factor relating to any  
18                  affected individuals, participants, or beneficiaries covered or new  
19                  individuals, participants, or beneficiaries who may become eligible for  
20                  such coverage.
- 21                  f. A decision by the carrier to discontinue offering and to nonrenew all its health  
22                  benefit plans or individual coverage delivered or issued for delivery to  
23                  employers or individuals in this state. In such a case, the carrier shall:
- 24                   (1) Provide advance notice of its decision under this paragraph to the  
25                   commissioner in each state in which it is licensed;
- 26                   (2) Provides notice of the decision not to renew coverage to all affected  
27                   individuals, employers, participants, and beneficiaries, and to the  
28                   commissioner in each state in which an affected insured is known to  
29                   reside at least one hundred eighty days prior to the nonrenewal of any  
30                   health benefit plans by the carrier. Notice to the commissioner under  
31                   this subdivision must be provided at least three working days prior to

- 1                   the notice to the affected individuals, employers, participants, and  
2                   beneficiaries; and
- 3           (3)   Discontinue all health insurance issued or delivered for issuance in the  
4                   state's group or individual market and not renew such health coverage  
5                   in that market.
- 6           g.   In the case of health benefit plans that are made available in the group or  
7                   individual market only through one or more associations, the membership of  
8                   an employer or individual in the association, on the basis of which the  
9                   coverage is provided, ceases, but only if the coverage is terminated under this  
10                  paragraph uniformly without regard to any health status-related factor relating  
11                  to any covered individual.
- 12           h.   The commissioner finds that the continuation of the coverage would not be in  
13                  the best interests of the policyholders or certificate holders or would impair the  
14                  carrier's ability to meet its contractual obligations. In this case the  
15                  commissioner shall assist affected insureds in finding replacement coverage.
- 16           2.   A carrier that elects not to renew a health benefit plan under subdivision f of  
17                  subsection 1 may not write new business in the applicable market in this state for a  
18                  period of five years from the date of notice to the commissioner.
- 19           3.   In the case of a carrier doing business in one established geographic service area  
20                  of the state, this section only applies to the carrier's operations in that service area.
- 21           4.   A carrier offering through a network plan may not be required to offer coverage or  
22                  accept applications pursuant to subsection 1 or 2 in the case of the following:
- 23                  a.   To an eligible person who no longer resides, lives, or works in the service  
24                        area, or in an area for which the carrier is authorized to do business, but only  
25                        if coverage is terminated under this subdivision uniformly without regard to  
26                        any health status-related factor; or
- 27                  b.   To a carrier that no longer has any enrollee in connection with the plan who  
28                        lives, resides, or works in the service area of the carrier, or the area for which  
29                        the carrier is authorized to do business.
- 30           5.   At the time of coverage renewal, a health insurance carrier may modify the health  
31                  insurance coverage for a product offered to a group or individual, if the modification

1                   is consistent with state law and effective on a uniform basis among group health  
2                   plans with that product.

3                   **SECTION 15. REPEAL.** Section 26.1-08-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
4 repealed.

5                   **SECTION 16. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Act becomes effective on July 1, 1997.

6                   **SECTION 17. EMERGENCY.** This Act is declared to be an emergency measure.