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Testimony to the North Dakota Interim Committee on Health Care Reform

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Chairman Keiser and members of the Committee, for the record my name is Josh Askvig and I am the Associate State Director of Advocacy for AARP North Dakota. I appreciate the opportunity to offer some brief comments in regards to the bill drafts you are discussing today.

As you know, AARP strongly believes the work you are doing to establish a strong health insurance exchange is one of the most crucial aspects of implementing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. As you continue your work in preparation for the special session, we wanted to take this opportunity to reiterate our call to ensure that the governing structure, regardless of where it is located, should ensure that the consumer voice is central and not secondary to others. Consumers will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the exchange and should be a majority of the board. Also, we believe that those being regulated by the exchange will be financially impacted and should be excluded from being on the board due to a conflict of interest.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and I would be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.