Testimony presented to the North Dakota House of Representatives, Appropriations Committee, Human Resources Sub-Committee.

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https://www.ndahec.org/

House Bill 1142: Area Health Education Centers (AHEC)

Chairman Nelson and Members of the House Appropriations Committee.

House Bill 1142 bill will provide up to four-hundred thousand dollars supplemental funding to The Department of Commerce to continue the operation of existing two Area Health Education Centers. With the Program Office located with the Center for Rural Health at the UND Medical School, and Western and Eastern operations in Hettinger and Mayville this operation seeks to assist with the development and support of future healthcare workforce needs in rural North Dakota.

The Eastern AHEC office is located at Mayville State University and serves 28 counties. The Western AHEC is in Hettinger and serves 25 counties. Over the past twelve years AHEC has impacted 23,256 people covering every county in the state.

This bill asks for \$400,000 of state funds which will be leveraged with other funds including a 1;1 match with Federal dollars. The AHEC federal grant



requires that 75% of the funding go to the regional offices in Hettinger and Mayville. Funding has been provided since 2008 in the East and since 2010 in the West.

Over the past two years, over 4000 students and other potential healthcare workers have come in contact with services and support provided by AHEC to acquaint them with the healthcare profession as a potential career.

## Accomplishments

- 1. AHEC establishes education programs to acquaint rural students to opportunities in health occupations.
- 2. AHEC helps establish clinical rotations in rural settings to recruit health care professionals to areas of need.
- 3. AHEC works with rural health care organizations and communities to develop a rural "grow your own" possibility.

4. Coordinates with education facilities to facilitate training of healthcare professionals. Funds are made available to assist rural students with needed continuing education and clinical rotations.

AHEC works with and supports HOSA-Future Healthcare Professionals, with groups in Bismarck, Grafton, Grand Forks, Fargo, Oakes and Langdon. There have been 42 AHEC scholars with 4 graduated, and 2094 individuals impacted by HOSA.

AHEC Helps with funding for students entering health care professions with expenses related to participation in rural clinical rotations and inter-professional activities.

AHEC establishes collaborative partnerships necessary to connect communities with health care professionals. Working with the Center for Rural Health's Workforce Specialist, AHEC has assists in recruiting family nurse practitioners, medical doctors, physicians' assistants, veterinarians, and others who fill needed positions in rural health care.

AHEC has a growing presence in assisting rural health care in ND and with continued support will have more success.

Please support this bill which is one part of helping us grow our own in the field of healthcare.

Thank You.
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## Additional Notes:

Students: There are over 200 potential careers in healthcare. For middle or high school students interested in a career in the healthcare industry, AHEC can help them explore career areas, discover where their interest lies, and provide tools and opportunities to pursue those interests.

Clinical Rotations: AHEC can also assist college students with field experiences and clinical experiences with grant funding for completing a rotation in rural North Dakota underserved areas.

Scholars Program: AHEC Scholars is a nationally recognized certificate program for health professions students interested in supplementing their education by gaining additional knowledge and experience in rural and/or underserved settings.