



House Bill 1441

March 8, 2021

Senate Industry, Business and Labor Committee

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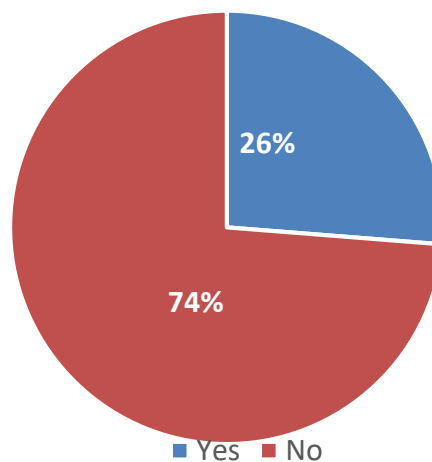
Chairman Klein, Members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee, My name is Janelle Moos, Associate State Director for Advocacy with AARP North Dakota. We are here to provide support for House Bill 1441.

As many of you know we at AARP North Dakota have been working for several sessions now trying to provide much needed support for the state's unpaid family caregivers. These are people who care for their loved ones at home – keeping them out of hospitals and nursing homes.

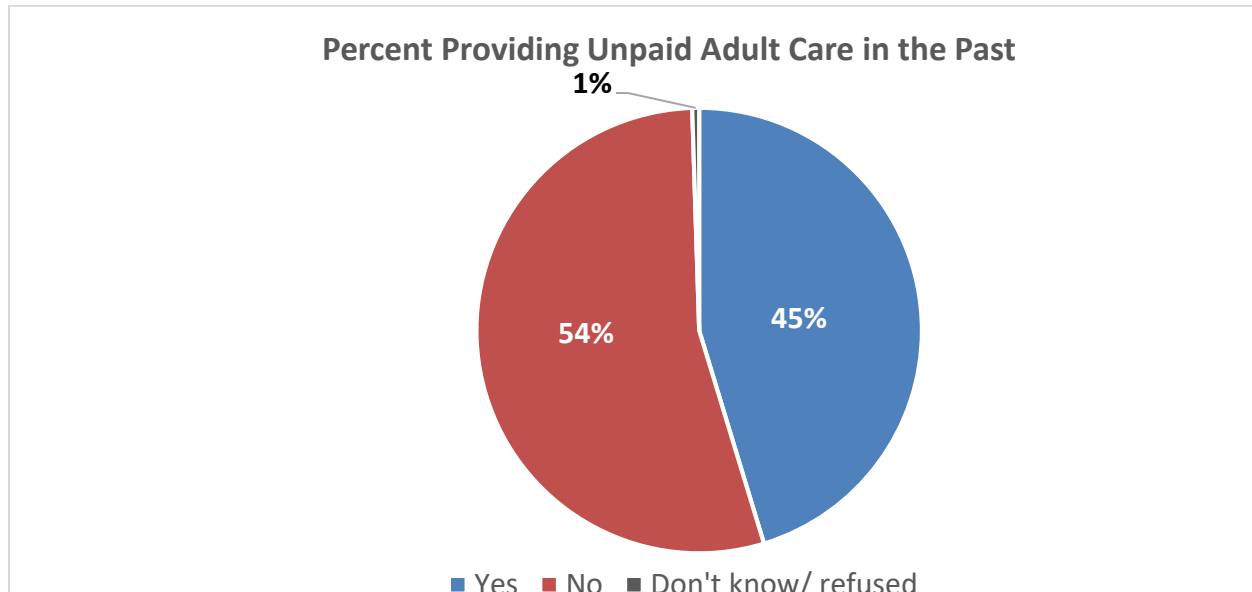
By doing so, these estimated 68,000 caregivers save the state more than \$980 million by providing 57 million hours of FREE health care and other work so their loved ones can stay at home.

In AARP's 2020 survey of North Dakota adults, in the past two years, one quarter (26%) of North Dakota residents age 45+ are currently providing unpaid help to an adult relative or friend.

Percent Providing Unpaid Adult Care



In addition, almost half (45%) of North Dakota residents age 45+ who are not currently unpaid caregivers have provided this type of help in the past.



In a 2017 survey of North Dakota caregivers care primarily for their parents (64%) and spouses (18%) – they assist with transportation (89%), finances (64%), household chores (87%) and shopping (87%). They also perform a number of medical tasks including overseeing medication (63%) and other complex nursing tasks like wound care and injections (56%).

As it relates to the provisions of HB 1441 – 68 percent of current and former caregivers say they work(ed) while also performing the caregiving duties. Of those who said they work(ed) – 72 percent of them said they had taken some time off from work and 28 percent said they had to take extended leave to care for their loved one. Then we have those who left full time jobs for part time ones so they could also provide care (15%) and those who quit work entirely (12%).

According to a new report from Harvard Business School (*The Caring Company: How employers can help employees manage their caregiving responsibilities – while reducing costs and increasing productivity*) released in 2019 – almost a third of workers – including many senior executives – say their careers have been adversely affected by caregiving obligations. And close to one-third of the employees surveyed in this study say they had voluntarily left a job during their career due to caregiving responsibilities.

It's these caregivers, the ones who work or could be working, who can truly benefit from paid family leave programs.

AARP strongly supported the federal Family and Medical Leave Act in 1993. That act provides patients with serious medical conditions and family members caring for them up to 12 weeks of

time off with guarantees to maintain insurance and retain a similar job when they return. As with House Bill 1509, the law focuses on businesses with 50 employees or more, lessening the burden on small businesses.

At the state level, AARP supports laws that provide paid leave – similar to the one proposed today.

Thank you for your thoughtful work on this bill. We encourage a do pass on HB 1441.