



House Human Services Committee

SB 2150

March 14, 2023

Chairman Weisz and Committee Members, I am Courtney Koebele and represent the North Dakota Medical Association. The North Dakota Medical Association is the professional membership organization for North Dakota physicians, residents, and medical students.

NDMA is neutral on the topic of abortion, and just like many segments of society, our members are on both sides of the abortion issue. However, the NDMA Policy Forum recently passed a policy opposing the criminalization of medical practice. This policy states as follows:

NDMA should take all reasonable and necessary steps to ensure that evidence-based medical decision-making and treatment, exercised in accordance with evidence-based standards of care, does not become a violation of criminal law.

NDMA supports SB 2150 and appreciates the work that went into this bill. This bill fixes our main objection to the trigger law – the affirmative defenses. Without the fixes, many common procedures performed by physicians are chargeable as a felony.

We also appreciate the amendments to SB 2150 made in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Based on consultation with physicians providing maternal care and their extensive experience helping pregnant women, the Senate Judiciary amended the bill to make sure the emergency exceptions covered the situations which may occur during a pregnancy.

No hospitals and clinics in the state perform elective abortions. However, during the management of pregnancies, and helping women have a successful birth, there are many conditions that are impossible to determine whether they are substantial and irreversible.

We have a physician here to testify in more detail as to why the slight amendment was necessary. Ana Tobiasz, a maternal and fetal medicine specialist from Bismarck.

For the record, North Dakota has 71 physicians that specialize in Obstetrics/Gynecology, with five of those specializing in maternal and fetal medicine. An Obstetrics and Gynecology residency involves four years of additional training after a four-year medical school education. A maternal fetal medicine specialty requires another additional three years after residency.

NDMA urges a DO PASS of SB 2150. Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee. I would be happy to answer any questions.