



# North Dakota House of Representatives

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Committees:  
Agriculture  
Human Services

## Bill SB1252

### Senate Education Committee

### Testimony of Rep. Gretchen Dobervich, Bill Cosponsor

February 3, 2025

Chairperson Beard and Members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record my name is Representative Gretchen Dobervich, I work for the people of District 11, and I am here to voice my strong support for Senate Bill 2286.

This bill represents a critical investment in healthcare education and the future of healthcare in North Dakota by ensuring the necessary funding and planning for an expanded Health Professions Collaborative Facility at the University of North Dakota. As the demand for healthcare services in North Dakota continues to grow, we must act now to ensure we have a well-educated workforce and the infrastructure necessary to meet this demand.

By studying the funding required to expand education and practicum opportunities across all health profession programs, this bill takes a proactive step toward strengthening our healthcare system. North Dakota faces ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining healthcare professionals, particularly in rural areas. Expanding UND's School of Medicine and Health Sciences will create new opportunities for students, encourage them to train

in-state, and ultimately increase the number of healthcare professionals who choose to stay and serve our communities.

Beyond workforce development, this bill fosters innovation and academic excellence. The additional \$55 million in general fund appropriations and \$40 million from other sources will support not just education but also critical research and discovery efforts in health, behavioral health, and wellness. Investing in this facility will not only improve healthcare access and outcomes for North Dakotans but also strengthen our state's reputation as a leader in medical education and research.

I strongly support this bill not just for its investments in medical and health professions education, but to address the fire marshal exit order that has been issued for a building on UND's campus that the School of Medicine and Health Professions utilizes outside of the building where most of the programs moved to in 2016. Other supporters of HB 1252 speaking today have/will discuss this in greater detail.

I urge a DO Pass from the committee to support this bill and move it forward to Senate Appropriations. A well-prepared healthcare workforce is essential to the well-being of our citizens and the strength of our communities. Let's take this opportunity to invest in a healthier North Dakota.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson and members of the committee. This concludes my testimony, I stand for any questions.