



Senate Human Services Committee

IN SUPPORT-HB 1044

February 16, 2021

Janelle Moos, AARP North Dakota

jmoos@aarp.org – (701) 355-3641

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee-

My name is Janelle Moos, Associate State Director for Advocacy with AARP North Dakota. We are here to provide support for HB 1044.

Our nation faces pressing health care challenges—an aging and more diverse population, more people with more chronic conditions, millions more uninsured, rising costs, and a shortage of providers. We can help address some of these challenges by maximizing the use of advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to tackle health care challenges in access, quality, and cost. That is why AARP North Dakota supports **House Bill 1044**, which would include North Dakota in the interstate Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Licensure Compact (APRN Compact).

The APRN Compact would streamline access and provide additional choices to patients and families by cutting red tape so APRNs can more easily deliver care across state lines. The APRN Compact also promotes safety and quality. It codifies uniform standards, ensures that states have the authority to enforce public protection at the state level, and makes it easier to exchange information among member states when issues arise.

AARP North Dakota believes enactment of the APRN Compact will enhance and improve health care access in frontier and rural communities across North Dakota, supporting patients and the nearly 68,000 family caregivers that help keep their loved ones safe and independent in the community. The APRN Compact is also a commonsense way to facilitate greater telehealth options making it easier for patients to receive care when and where they need it.

Health care provider shortages hits older residents hard. Older adults sometimes lack the ability or resources to get to their appointments because of mobility issues, long travel distances to a provider, and wait times for appointments. This risks their health and adds unnecessary stress

to family caregivers. Once implemented,¹ the APRN Compact would encourage APRNs to provide care both in-person or through telehealth technologies in multiple states, connecting patients and their family caregivers with qualified primary care. APRNs are a highly valued and integral part of the health care system and a crucial source of support for family caregivers. They are registered nurses with a masters or doctoral level education trained to provide advanced health care services, including primary and preventative care.

Moreover, the APRN Compact can help residents quickly access lifesaving services during natural disasters, weather emergencies, or a public health crisis. As the COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated, there is a need for state-based APRN license portability during a health care crisis to help states secure surge capacity and save lives when local needs exceed local health care supply. Our participation in the APRN Compact would complement North Dakota's participation in the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC or "RN Compact") and allow patients to benefit fully from the array of services APRNs could provide across state lines. Much like the RN Compact, the APRN Compact would also help military families during the relocation process, if the military spouse is an APRN.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on House Bill 1044 and ask for your support.

We believe this policy change will improve patient access to care, facilitate expanded opportunities for telehealth, improve health outcomes, and reduce costs.

Thank you.

¹ The APRN Compact was adopted on August 12, 2020 and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing has developed model language for states to enact the APRN Compact. The APRN Compact will be implemented once seven states enact the APRN Compact. North Dakota is the first state to introduce legislation enacting the APRN Compact.