



**2021 HCR 3014**  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
**Senator Judy Lee, Chairman**  
**March 29, 2021**

Chairman Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Melissa Hauer, General Counsel, North Dakota Hospital Association. I am here to testify regarding 2021 House Concurrent Resolution 3014 and ask that you give it a **Do Pass** recommendation.

We support the concurrent resolution's suggestion for a study of solutions to provider and end-user barriers to access to and utilization of telehealth services in this state. Telehealth can improve the delivery of acute and behavioral health services. Many innovations have been made to improve access, quality, and efficiencies in areas such as critical care, teleneurology, telepsychiatry and home health settings. The COVID-19 pandemic has further driven the demand for, and use of, telehealth. We believe this demand will only continue to grow even after the pandemic. So, identifying barriers and solutions to improve access to care is important.

Telehealth can improve quality outcomes, reduce length of stay, readmissions, and emergency room visits, expedite treatment, and broaden access to specialty providers. It also ranks high in patient and staff satisfaction and can result in better management of care. Telehealth services, such as telepsychiatry, can also provide privacy for patients who might otherwise be unwilling to seek such services and it provides access in areas of our state for those who might otherwise have to travel to receive the services.

NDHA supports a study to identify barriers to access to telehealth services which could be used to further increase patient access and quality of care. We ask that you give this concurrent resolution a **Do Pass** recommendation.

I would be happy to take any questions you may have. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Hauer, General Counsel/VP  
North Dakota Hospital Association