

Testimony
House Bill 1115 – Department of Human Services
House Human Services Committee
Robin Weisz, Chairman
January 10, 2017

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, I am LeeAnn Thiel, Administrator of Medicaid Payment and Reimbursement Services of the Medical Services Division for the Department of Human Services. I am here today in support of House Bill 1115, which was introduced at the request of the Department.

The moratoria on nursing facility beds and basic care beds have been in place since 1995 and have been extended each biennium. This bill would continue the moratorium through July 31, 2019.

2011 HB 1040, which extended the moratoria to July 31, 2013, also directed the State Health Council to review the health care bed recommendations. In 2012, the State Health Council presented a recommendation to the Health Services Interim Committee to continue the moratoria on nursing facility and basic care beds in North Dakota. The recommendation was a nursing facility bed target of 55 beds per 1,000 and a basic care bed target of 15 beds per 1,000 population aged 65 and above. Based on 2010 data, there were 57.10 nursing home beds per 1,000 and 16.49 basic care beds per 1,000. As of September 30, 2016, there are 16 nursing facilities with occupancy below 90 percent, and the basic care facility occupancy rate in all regions of the state is below 90 percent.

Currently, state law allows two exceptions to the basic care bed moratorium, which are: (1) a nursing facility may convert nursing facility bed capacity to basic care beds; and (2) an entity can demonstrate the need for more basic care beds to the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services. To demonstrate a need, the facility must show that occupancy within a 50-mile radius at existing basic care facilities is at or above 90 percent.

There is no exception to the nursing facility bed moratorium. A facility must purchase or transfer beds from another facility.

The Department's 2017-2019 budget was built based on both moratoria continuing.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to address any questions that you may have.