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Testimony Senate Bill 1205 — Human Service

3/9/2021

Good morning Chairwoman Lee, and members of the committee. My name is Tara Lea Muhlhauser, Executive Director of CAWS ND (Lobbyist # 1035). I am in favor of this bill.

CAWS ND is a coalition of program in the state providing services for victims and survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking. I represent the 20 programs across the state of North Dakota. Nine programs in North Dakota provide Shelter services in their communities.

CAWS ND supports the establishment of a Maternal Mortality Review Committee. The literature, data and research in Public Health confirm maternal mortality in Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. From the time of the conception, women are at a higher risk category in their intimate relationships.

Because of this, we ask that there be an opportunity to consider Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault as specific issues in the review process, with findings. The opportunity to know more about Maternal Mortality in our state will provide our coalition and programs, including the medical providers. This will allow additional information to better serve and find opportunities to prevent this tragedy. The more we know, the safer the women we work with every day, across the state, will be there to raise their newborn child.

Thank you for this opportunity and if you have any questions, please let me know.