

## Chairman Robin Weisz and Members of the House Human Services Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life, the oldest and largest pro-life organization in our state. I am testifying today to represent the interests of our 3700 members across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there have been many questions regarding what this means for women and families who find themselves in unplanned pregnancies in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death.

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protecting life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that educates our citizens, encourages life, offers alternatives to abortion, and provides aid or resources to those who qualify. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their only option to achieve a successful, happy life.

SB 2230 would “...establish an adoption assistance program to provide financial assistance for adoptive families.” We believe that this is a wonderful step in the right direction for mothers and families in our state as we look towards alternatives to abortion for unexpected pregnancies. This legislation, if passed, would help alleviate some of the costs of adoption in our state which will encourage families to look into this avenue as an alternative.

I ask this committee today for a **Do Pass recommendation on SB 2230** in order to protect mothers and families facing unexpected pregnancies and support families looking into adoption as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I am available by phone or email to answer any questions you may have.



Sincerely,

*Sierra M Heitkamp*

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**NDRL Legislative Director**