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Senate Bill No. 2202
House Judiciary Committee
Testimony Presented by Seth O'Neill, JD, MSW
Email: soneill@cawsnorthdakota.org
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Chairman Klemin and members of the Committee, my name is Seth O'Neill and I am representing CAWS North Dakota in support of SB 2202. CAWS North Dakota is the statewide coalition of the domestic violence and sexual assault programs in North Dakota. Our programs serve victims of sexual assault and domestic violence across the state.

We support this bill because it would provide valuable training and support to service providers of domestic violence victims. In 2021, our member programs served 5,417 new victims of domestic violence.¹ Additionally, at least 3,895 children were directly impacted by these incidences of domestic violence. Currently, there is not a uniform process in evidence collection in domestic violence cases. We believe that widespread use of domestic violence forensic medical examinations will allow for better evidence collection and successful prosecutions of domestic violence offenders. Additionally, having service providers specially trained to do this work will provide comfort and support for domestic violence victims during a very difficult time.

We encourage the committee to give SB 2202 a do pass recommendation. I appreciate your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

¹ See North Dakota Domestic Violence Facts 2021 (Included in Testimony).