



January 25, 2023

Senator Michael A. Wobbema
Chairman
Workforce Development
600 E. Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

RE: SB 2301 – Child Care Stabilization Program

Chairman, Wobbema and Members of the Committee,

As the Executive Director of the Williston Economic Development office, I am pleased to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 2301.

Access to quality childcare has and continues to be an issue in our workforce recruitment efforts in the City of Williston. It has been a contributing factor in loss of business and productivity within the community.

Assessing this through my office we have found the problem to be two-fold. Creating and operating facilities are costly. Once created, we often encounter these facilities not operating to their maximum potential due to lack of workforce. Trying to be competitive with wages and benefits against an open & lucrative job market is a losing battle for these providers. This is the type of program these providers need to sustain their workers.

Over the last several years, the Williston Economic Development Office has contributed more than 2.3 million dollars amongst 37 different providers/facilities in our area. We believe we have contributed to some form in having a hand in more than one thousand child care spaces created and/or maintained. Still the need remains great.

I strongly ask for your support on Senate Bill 2301!

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn Wenko".

Shawn Wenko
Executive Director
Williston Economic Development