

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Laura Mehrer with the Greater North Dakota Chamber. GNDC is North Dakota's largest statewide business advocacy organization, with membership represented by small and large businesses, local chambers, and trade and industry associations across the state. We stand in **support** of Senate Bill 2107.

Labor availability has been identified as the top business concern facing companies in North Dakota. In our 2024 ND Economics and Employer Survey of our membership:

- 70% of respondents indicated they were having trouble hiring employees.
- 69% of respondents indicated that childcare was an issue for their organization.

In the 2023 legislative session, a historic \$65.6 million funding package was passed to help address childcare shortages within the state. GNDC would like to express its appreciation to the legislative body for recognizing the impacts lack of childcare can have on the workforce.

Our members support solutions that remove barriers to childcare licensure and support the quality of early childhood and school-age programs serving children birth through age 12. Senate Bill 2107 provides a streamlined and efficient solution for childcare licensing and training.

Childcare continues to be a challenge for our members, and we want to express our support for practical and effective solutions. GNDC respectfully requests a Do Pass on Senate Bill 2107.