



**SB 2341**

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Sammi Weber, North Dakota Student Association

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Chair Warrey and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sammi Weber, and I am the President of the North Dakota Student Association. I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 2341 on behalf of the NDSA.

The North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) is a student organization established in 1969 that is dedicated to ensuring that students have a voice in policy that affects Higher Education. The NDSA consists of delegates from each of the 11 public institutions that meet monthly to engage students in Higher Education policy in North Dakota. Our mission is to empower students, foster collaboration between students across campuses in the North Dakota University System (NDUS), and to advocate on issues of higher education in support of access, affordability, quality, and the student experience.

The NDSA has been long committed to advocating for student mental health and well-being. On October 26, 2024, the NDSA General Assembly passed [NDSA-01-2425](#): A Resolution in Support of the NDSA's Legislative Priorities for the 25-27 Biennium. One of our priorities outlined in the resolution states is "expanding mental health resources on NDUS campuses." A critical step toward achieving this goal is North Dakota's participation in the interstate compact for school psychologists, which would help increase access to qualified mental health professionals for students across the state.

The North Dakota University System has faced significant challenges in staffing counselors and psychologists—not due to a lack of effort by institutions of the state, but because of a nationwide shortage. According to U.S. Department of Labor, the occupation growth rate for psychologists

from 2023 to 2033 is projected to be 7%, which is 3% higher than the average growth rate across all occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor). As the need for school psychologists continues to rise, North Dakota must take proactive steps to attract these essential professionals. SB 2341 offers a solution by easing licensure requirements for school psychologists transferring from other states. By eliminating barriers to equivalent licensure, North Dakota can become a more attractive place for mental health professionals, ultimately strengthening support systems for students.

Increased access to school psychologists and mental health resources, students will receive the support they need more quickly and effectively. This will lead to a decline in mental health issues, reducing crises on NDUS campuses and improving student well-being. By prioritizing initiatives like SB 2341, North Dakota can create a healthier, more supportive environment where students can thrive academically and personally.

On behalf of the NDSA, I respectfully ask the committee for a DO PASS recommendation on SB 2341.

#### References

“Psychologists.” *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 29 Aug. 2024, [www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/psychologists.htm](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/psychologists.htm).