

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Andrea Pfennig, and I am the Vice President of Government Affairs for 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 House Bill 1119.

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.

However, we also feel it would be beneficial to ensure efficient utilization of resources by measuring the impact. We feel this study would be a positive step in addressing the childcare shortage in the state by establishing metrics to measure success, fully understand barriers, and develop solutions that will keep North Dakota moving forward.

Childcare remains an issue for our members, and we would like to express our support for effective and rapidly deployed solutions. We feel this study will help identify which strategies will provide the highest results.