



521 E. Main Ave. Suite 320, Bismarck, N.D. 58501
(P) 701.255.6240 (TF) 1.888.255.6240 (F) 701.255.1904
www.cawsnorthdakota.org
facebook.com/CAWSNorthDakota • [Twitter @CAWSNorthDakota](https://twitter.com/CAWSNorthDakota)

Testimony

House Bill 2004 – House Appropriations

3/15/2021

Good morning Chairwoman Holmberg, and members of the committee. My name is Tara Lea Muhlhauser, Executive Director of CAWS ND (Lobbyist # 1035). I am in favor of this bill.

CAWS ND is a coalition of programs in the state providing services for victims and survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking. I represent the 20 programs across the state of North Dakota. Nine programs in North Dakota provide Shelter services in their communities.

CAWS ND supports this bill and we are appreciative of our partnership with the Department of Health. And, we are also appreciative of the support we have been given from the State of ND and our legislators. Our funds provide our twenty programs with funds to address Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Batterers Intervention.

In 2019, 73% of victims served experienced physical abuse. Alcohol was used by the abuser in 30% of the cases. At least 4,121 children were directly impacted by these incidents, and at least 24% of the victims were under the age of 25, with 5% under the age of 18. During this time 458 Emergency Protection Orders from the District Court. (Data from Domestic Violence Facts 2019-CAWS-ND)

Data on Sexual Assaults show that at least 61% of adult assaults were raped with 10% attempted rape. At least 352 of primary victims were under the age of 18 at the time of the assault. Thirty-three percent of all assaults occurred in the victim's or assailants' home. In 2019, at least 838 of victims were female, 49 of the assailants were female. At least 14,163 services to primary victims were provided by the crisis centers advocates during 2019. (Data from Domestic Violence Facts 2019-CAWS-ND)

The funds you provided for CAWS-ND served over 61,750 adults and 47,18 children over the last decade. This current year the impact of the Covid pandemic was difficult for families, and shelter was needed at a time when distancing took 50% of the available shelter, costs to pay for hotels when shelters were full, and food, heat, PPE and water were in demand with the families we serve.

As we move forward with the next biennium, we are grateful for your support that allows us to sustain our programs and the services that are needed in every community in the state.

Thank you for this opportunity and if you have any questions, please let me know.