

*Senate Bill 2256*

*Senate Human Services*

*January 26, 2021*

*Madam Chair and members of the Senate Human Services,*

*I am Sammantha Peterson, a North Dakota parent of a child with cerebral palsy. I am giving testimony today, to ask you to recommend a do pass on Senate Bill 2256.*

*My daughter is among many others in the state who has a significant physical disability and does not qualify for any of the existing waivers. My daughter is beautiful, sweet, and smart. She is also a wheelchair user and needs assistance with the most basic of care. Without access to the Developmental Delay (DD) waiver, our family goes without much needed services. My daughter does not have an intellectual disability severe enough to qualify for the waiver based on its current verbiage. Yet she spends 4 or more hours in physical and occupational therapy each week. She sees a team of specialists too long to list. She has undergone complex surgeries that have hospitalized her for weeks at a time and intense rehab afterwards. During her hip and foot surgery at the end of 2017, I spent 22 straight days in my home caring for her full time.*

*Like any other disability or chronic health condition, a child with cerebral palsy needs access to safe and reliable care. She needs expensive home modifications, assistive technology, vehicle modifications, and so forth. Without access to the waiver, our family struggles to afford these things out of pocket. I truly feel that this holds my daughter back. She could do so much more if she just had the accessibility to do so. This also hinders my ability to have full time employment. As much as I love my daughter and will always take care of her, surviving on one income in our current economy is difficult. These children deserve not only a study, but a true evaluation and action. It is long overdue, and our families need your help.*

*Thank you so much for your time,*

*Sammantha Peterson*

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