North Dakota Right to LIFE

Chairman Craig Headland and Members of the House Finance and Taxation Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am testifying today to represent the interests of our 3700 members across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there have been many questions regarding what this means for women and families who find themselves in unplanned pregnancies in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death.

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protecting life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that educates our citizens, encourages life, and provides aid or resources to those who qualify. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their only option to achieve a successful, happy life.

After discussing HB 1176 with our members and other partners in the pro-life committee, we believe that this is a wonderful step in the right direction for mothers and families in our state. The entities impacted by this bill (maternity homes, child placing agencies, or pregnancy help centers) operate on concise budgets that are sustained by donor dollars. These entities work tirelessly to provide resources for expecting mothers, options for adoption placement, and counseling services as these brave woman take the next steps in their journey. This legislation, if passed, would help encourage donors in our state to give monetary donations to these entities because of the proposed tax credit.

I ask this committee today for a **Do Pass recommendation on HB 1176** in order to protect mothers and families facing unplanned or crisis pregnancies as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I am available by phone or email to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Sierra M Heitkamp

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NDRL Legislative Director

(701) 955-8239 office@ndrl.org P.O. Box 1325, Williston, ND 58801