

TESTIMONY OF
MAJOR JAY SHELDON
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD
BEFORE THE
HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES
06 MARCH 2023
SENATE BILL 2182

Good morning, Chairwoman Weisz and members of the committee, I am Jay Sheldon, Strategy and Policy Officer for the North Dakota National Guard (NDNG) and administrator for the Task Force for Military Issues in North Dakota (TF MIND). I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 2182.

I would like to take a moment to explain TF MIND. It is a Governor's appointed task force chaired by the Lt. Governor with members from around North Dakota with a focus on Minot, Grand Forks, Fargo, and Bismarck, communities with the largest military footprint. The group normally meets twice a year and discusses issues that impact military members and their families in North Dakota. TF MIND has used a Department of Defense website that lists the top issues, heavily focused on occupational licensing and military children. This bill supports both of those areas.

Task Force MIND supports the waiver of Department of Defense licensed and registered Family Child Care providers. In most cases, military family childcare providers must be licensed or registered by the state in addition to the military. By exempting providers already certified through the military SB 2182 would enhance the economic status of both the providers and families.

Family childcare workers provide military families with reliable and personalized care in a homelike setting, on and off installations. These FCC providers, the majority of whom are military spouses (87% in fiscal year 2021), operate as independent business owners, contributing to the financial stability of their families.

When moving with their service member, FCC providers do not have to complete additional training or another background check when they arrive at their new installation, unless their certification is due for a renewal. The new installation commander grants providers certification upon completion of the required home inspections.

States, however, require licensure or registration for some on installation and all off-installation FCC providers — which is duplicative of the military service FCC certification process. This can delay them from providing childcare, which can create a financial hardship for a military spouse reestablishing a business after a military directed move.

By exempting FCC providers already certified through the military service process, states enhance the quality of life and economic security of both the FCC provider and military families seeking qualified childcare options.

Installation family childcare programs manage the military service certification of FCC providers, in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 6060.02, "Child Development Programs."

In discussion with Human Services and Grand Forks Air Force Base childcare personnel the DoD standard is by enlarge stricter than North Dakota standards.

To potentially address the existing shortage of childcare providers and additionally streamline an employment opportunity for military spouses in North Dakota I ask for your support of SB 2182 and will stand by for any questions that you may have.