

House Human Services Committee
SB 2190
Senator Kathy Hogan
March 8, 2023

Chairman Weisz and members of the committee, my name is Kathy Hogan and I represent District 21, central Fargo, and a small corner of West Fargo.

This bill addresses the need to support low-income families who are unable to work without childcare assistance and assures that providers are paid appropriately.

This bill originally requested a 10% increase in childcare assistance payments. In consultation with the Department of Human Services, they requested that we modify that request to plan and implement a new payment structure that more closely aligns the rate of childcare payments to actual costs. We are also wanting a review and simplify the application and reporting processes. The bill limits the increase to up to 10% and sets a minimum of a 5% increase. It also reduces the family co-pay on the lowest income families.

Currently many eligible families simply do not know that they are eligible for assistance. There is \$500,000 to expand enrollment education and assistance.

We are totally supportive of other childcare assistance supports that are in the budget but feel we should set the policy direction. This helps both the family, and the childcare providers by stabilizing one piece of the funding puzzle.

The governor has requested \$38 million for the childcare assistance program. This bill establishes the framework for the policies related to the childcare assistance program.

I am more than willing to answer any questions.