

**Testimony  
Engrossed Senate Bill No. 2335  
House Human Services Committee  
Representative Weisz, Chairman  
March 14, 2023**

Chairman Weisz, and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Cory Pedersen, Director of the Children and Family Services (CFS) Section with the Department of Health and Human Services (Department). I am here today to provide information on Engrossed Senate Bill 2335 for your consideration.

Our primary concerns relate to the training requirements outlined in Section 4 of the Bill. Lines 21-22 instruct the Department to “integrate fetal alcohol spectrum disorder instruction into the training programs for public and private child welfare providers and foster parents”.

The Department has contracts with the UND Training Center and the Native American Training Institute (NATI) to provide both child welfare certification training and training for foster parents. This training is both comprehensive and targeted in that it is structured to assure that participants receive training and resources that cover the variety of complex needs that children in their care may have.

Senate Bill 2335 would create the only diagnosis-specific training requirement in our system. In the past, FAS training has been offered to child welfare workers and stakeholders over the years at different times

and at statewide conferences. This effort will continue as we have staff turnover.

Additionally, the Department is unclear about who is included in the term “public and private child welfare providers” (line 22 page 3). The Department is also unsure how to enforce a training requirement on “private child welfare providers” and how to “integrate a formal fetal alcohol spectrum disorder screening into the early and periodic screening diagnostic and treatment services” through the foster care licensing chapter 50-11, as contemplated in the Bill as this section of law deals with the licensing of foster care.

The Department respectfully requests that the Committee remove Section 4 of Senate Bill 2335.

This concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.