



Great Public Schools

Great Public Service

**Testimony Before the House IBL Committee
SB 2301
February 7, 2023**

Chairman Louser and members of the Committee, for the record, my name is Nick Archuleta, and I am proud to serve as president of North Dakota United. I am here today to urge a ***do pass*** recommendation for SB 2301.

Mr. Chairman, for many years, childcare in North Dakota has been a vexing issue. Even today there are “childcare deserts” where quality daycare does not exist at all. Over the course of the last two years, ND United has worked with other concerned groups and individuals to discover why there are so few daycare options in areas of our state and what could be done to provide piece of mind for young families who need dependable, high-quality childcare options. Over the course of that time, we have heard many anecdotes as to the scope of the problem. Two that come immediately to mind are the teacher in south central North Dakota who drives forty miles one way to drop off and pick up her child before and after work; the teacher in Beulah who called our office asking how to get out of her teaching contract after being informed that the three spots she had reserved for her young children at the local daycare co-op were gone because the co-op was having trouble finding employees. These are just two of many examples of the effects of inconsistent daycare in North Dakota.

With the current average wage of childcare workers just north of eleven dollars per hour, many people who would otherwise enjoy working in childcare simply cannot afford to do so. SB 2301, Mr. Chairman, aims to mitigate this issue by providing funding to childcare providers that they must use to pay or provide benefits to childcare workers. As a result, daycare providers will be able to offer higher salaries that attract workers without passing the additional expense on to parents.

SB 2301 is a good bill that, should it become law, will help daycare providers, their employees, and parents who are anxious to rejoin the workforce. For these reasons, Chairman Louser, and members of the Committee, we urge a do pass recommendation for SB 2301.