

**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill No. 2238**  
**House Judiciary Committee**  
**Representative Klemin, Chairman**  
March 14, 2023

Chairman Klemin, and members of the House Judiciary Committee, I am Sara Stolt, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services (Department). I appear before you to offer information and support related to Senate Bill 2238.

Senate Bill 2238 seeks to address a challenge childcare providers and other employers have in obtaining fingerprints for their federally required fingerprint-based background checks.

The Department operates live scan fingerprint machines in each of the state's eight Human Service Centers (HSC). These fingerprinting locations can be found Fargo, Grand Forks, Devils Lake, Jamestown, Minot, Williston, Dickinson and Bismarck. In addition, live scan machines are also located at the State Hospital in Jamestown, Life Skills Transition Center (LSTC) in Grafton, and the Rolla outreach clinic. An additional portable machine is available in Dickinson to be checked out by the childcare licensors as needed.

Live scan machines allow the Department to digitally scan fingerprints, eliminating the need for ink-rolled fingerprints. The digital fingerprints are then sent directly to the Department's Central Background Check Unit and the ND Bureau of Criminal Investigations. Once the Central Background Check Unit receives the fingerprints and the full packet of materials from the HSC Live Scan Operator, the fingerprints can be processed. Live scan machines are required to be on the State of ND's IT network to assure safe

and secure transmission of prints from the field to the Central Background Check Unit and the ND Bureau of Criminal Investigations.

The machines currently in use are over 20 years old and use an obsolete operating system, which poses a security risk and compromises productivity. To remedy this, replacement machines for each of the eleven fixed locations described above will be installed before the end of the current biennium.

Each of the fixed locations has at least one trained staff person available to conduct the live scan fingerprints. Only Southeast Human Service Center has a dedicated full-time temporary staff person to conduct the live scan fingerprints. All other trained staff have multiple duties within their location, including conducting live scan fingerprints. The 2023-25 Executive Budget Request includes a request to convert the existing full time temporary position at Southeast Human Service Center to an FTE to reduce the disruptive impact of high turnover on fingerprint appointment availability. At SEHSC, it can be up to a two week wait to get fingerprints scheduled. In addition, we can see a longer wait in Bismarck, Minot and Grand Forks.

The 2023-25 budget request also includes funding to support further automation of the processes surrounding finger printing and background checks.

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