



Testimony
HB 1004
Senate Appropriations: Human Resources
March 9, 2023

Good morning, Chairman Dever and members of the Senate Appropriations Human Resources Committee. My name is Kathy Keiser, and I am the Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities in Bismarck; our mission is “to improve the lives of children and their families”.

We own and operate the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile which delivers dental care to underserved children in the western half of North Dakota. I am here today to provide testimony in support of HB 1004 and requesting \$100,000 for supplies for the Care Mobile.

I would like to begin by thanking you for the generous support that we’ve received from you for many years.

We have just completed our 11th year of service and in 2022, the Care Mobile treated 962 children in 1,679 visits/encounters providing 7,145 services for a value of \$532,860 in treatment provided. Of the children served, 76% were uninsured with 33% enrolled in Medicaid; no child is turned away for inability to pay and for most, we are their only option for care. Over the 2 years of the Appropriation, the total value of \$1,065,720 in services provided is a very good return on the \$100,000 investment that we receive from the Legislature.

Our preliminary demographics show that of the children treated in 2021, 44% were Native American, 36% were Caucasian, 9% were African American, 7% were Hispanic and <4% were other races. This data indicates that we are reaching our target population, treating a high percentage of Native American children as they experience tooth decay at a much higher rate than non-native children.

Since the Care Mobile began operations 12 years ago, nearly 14,000 children have been served and more than 24,000 appointments provided for a total value of \$5,861,229. We are completely booked for 2023 and the demand for services continues to far outweigh our capabilities.

Our annual budget is approximately \$600,000/year and on-going funding is always a challenge. Any support will help us reach our goal of serving underserved children.

We work closely with the ND Oral Health and Medicaid Programs, the ND Oral Health Coalition and the ND Dental Association to enhance existing programs, as well as in the development of new programs to reach even more children.

Working with children is always rewarding and I'd like to share a recent story. A young boy finished his visit with one of our Dental Hygienists and asked her: " did you learn how to do this on YouTube?"

Thank you again and please support HB 1004 to continue to make dental care accessible to some of North Dakota's most vulnerable children.

I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

Kathy Keiser
Executive Director
Ronald McDonald House Charities of Bismarck
kathy@rmhbismarck.org
701-258-8551

Attachments: Ronald McDonald Care Mobile Service Delivery Summary
Ronald McDonald Care Mobile 2022 Summary & Progress Report