



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

On behalf of the YMCAs of North Dakota, and childcare providers across the state, we are in support of the SB 2012, to provide an appropriation for defraying the expenses of various divisions of the Department of Health and Human Services.

As we have shared over the last two years with the department and various Senators, funding to bolster the department is needed to help with staffing related to background check processes, digitalization of key processes, and other key functions that the department manages in relation to childcare services across the state.

In these discussions, we have shared that background checks can take anywhere from two to five weeks depending on the staffing model in the department. This is causing programs across the state to operate in violation of their license when the choice is stay open and provide care or have someone work that hasn't received the completed background check. Bordering states are able to complete this process in 48 hours.

The need to upgrade our systems in the state are long overdue. Digitization of forms and submission not only speeds the process but also ensures accuracy of the information. If through this appropriation to help the staffing model, these projects are completed the above background check will decrease its lag of wait time.

Childcare services across the state have been top of mind for all government officials. We commend you for your focus. This has come with additional pressure on providers to provide more childcare openings. Until some of these issues listed above are addressed, it will be impossible for providers across the state to do so. Your attention to a step to support the Department of Health and Human Services will improve these areas and allow us to focus on providing quality, and more, care to the youth and families of our state, helping increase our workforce in the process.

Thank you.

Yours in Service,

Stephen Smith  
President and CEO  
YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties

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