

**Senate Human Services Committee
Testimony In Support of Senate Bill #2051
1-4-23**

Chairman Lee, members of the committee,

My name is Greg Kasowski, and I'm the executive director of the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota. I appear today in support of SB 2051, specifically the section 9 amendment.

For those unfamiliar with Children's Advocacy Centers, we provide direct services to victims of child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, and other forms of child maltreatment. Before Children's Advocacy Centers existed, children would have to relay their story of trauma on average 10 to 12 times—once to law enforcement, then to human services workers, then to medical personnel, then to prosecutors, and on and on it went.

But now, with Children's Advocacy Centers, children only tell their story of trauma once, in a child-friendly environment, and to a trained expert forensic interviewer. We also provide many other services—such as medical exams, and victim advocacy and mental health services—to help children and families in their journey toward healing.

Paula Condol, executive director of the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center, will now explain the background to the section 9 changes.