

Testimony Prepared for the
Senate Human Services Committee

January 11, 2023

By: Kim Jacobson, Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone Director

RE: Senate Bill 2128 – Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Kim Jacobson. I am the Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone Director, which includes the service area of Traill and Steele Counties. In addition, I serve as President of the North Dakota Human Service Zone Director Association. Please consider my testimony in support of SB 2128 with suggested amendment.

North Dakota should be very proud of the progress made on strengthening our behavioral health system over recent years. While there is more work to do, North Dakota has certainly improved behavioral health services. There are many merits to the establishment of certified community behavioral health clinics. I support the next chapter of improved behavioral health services to include the implementation of certified community behavioral health clinics. They would provide expanded behavioral health services and offer community-driven response.

In reviewing SB 2128, lines 9-14, pose concern. I appreciate the confidence the Bill Sponsors have in the ability of human service zones to serve as an option for establishing certified behavioral health clinics. However, human service zones do not have the structure or ability to assume these important responsibilities. For these reasons, I suggest amendment that would remove alternative designation for human service zone to become certified community behavioral health clinics.

Thank you for consideration of my testimony. I stand for questions from the committee.