

Chairwoman Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am testifying today to represent the interests of our 3700 members across the state of North Dakota.

Our mission this year at NDRL is to continue our work in protecting life at all stages, by backing legislation that educates our citizens, encourages life, and provides aid or resources to those who qualify. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their only option to achieve a successful, happy life.

After discussing SB 2129 with our members and other partners in the pro-life committee, we believe that this legislation is the best course of action moving forward in regard to funding abortion alternative programs in our state. The programs who would receive benefits in North Dakota “...provide[d] information, counseling, support services, and material assistance to pregnant women, women who believe they may be pregnant, and parents or other relatives caring for children twelve months of age or younger,” as the bill says.

Supporting and uplifting women and families in unexpected pregnancy is our duty as North Dakotans. I think that we can all agree today that protecting those most vulnerable is not a partisan discussion, it is important we work together to find solutions to the very real and current issues we are facing as a state.

I ask this committee today for a **Do Pass recommendation on SB 2129** in order to solidify the values of North Dakotans as we continue to provide aid and resources for those pregnant women and families to find themselves experiencing an unexpected pregnancy.

Thank you for your time today and I will now stand for any questions that the committee may have.



Sincerely,

Sierra M Heitkamp
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NDRL Legislative Director