

**TESTIMONY**  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
**SB 2190**  
**January 18, 2023**  
**Senator Kathy Hogan**

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Service Committee, my name is Kathy Hogan, and I represent District 21 central Fargo and a corner of West Fargo.

The childcare infrastructure in ND is extremely fragile. This is the first of four bills that will offer specific solutions to stabilize this infrastructure. There isn't just one answer. These ideas came from interviews with many families, providers, excellent resources such as Childcare Aware, Growing Futures and providers I visited with at the door campaigning.

This bill addresses the need to support low-income families who are unable to work without necessary financial support and assure that providers are paid appropriately. In 2022, in response to the pandemic, North Dakota increased the income level for the CCAP to 85% of the state's median income so that more working families could get help with childcare costs. Attached is a copy of the sliding fee scale for your information and the program brochure. The department also moved to prospective payment in November which is a significant improvement.

This bill does four things:

- 1 It encourages the simplification of the CCA application processes to assure that families are informed and educated about this resource.
- 2 It increases the childcare assistance payment rate by 10% from the rates that were established during Covid.
- 3 It encourages the Department to have a strategic plan including public education to both providers and low-income families regarding program benefits, application processes.
- 4 It eliminates family co-pays for the lowest income families.

In looking at the data from the comprehensive rate study that was completed by Child Care Aware, it appears that there are Child Care Assistance families who are eligible are not applying or receiving assistance. This creates hardships for both families and providers. Here is the link to that report [2021-ccap-market-rate-survey](#) and physically attached are the specific county reports for committee from various counties including two urban, one rural and one tribal county comparing child care costs and reimbursement rates.

This bill is targeted first and foremost targeted at helping low income working families access child care so that they may work or get training to improve their family by increasing their income. The bill also helps providers by providing increased reimbursement.

I look forward to working with the Department of Health and Human Services to strengthen this program.

I am willing to answer any questions.

