

**TESTIMONY**  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
**SB 2238**  
**January 30, 2023**  
**Senator Kathy Hogan**

Chairman Lee and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Kathy Hogan and I still represent District 21. This is the last of the childcare bills I have introduced.

Over the last 12 to 18 months, discussion regarding the need to stabilize the childcare infrastructure has generated many creative ideas and suggestions. This is a complex issue, there is not one simple solution. Senate Bill 2238 is the major bill that is targeted at shortening the time it takes to get background checks for childcare providers and provides for a “shall consider” interim study on ways to simplify the background check process for various groups.

In Minnesota, the time from the initial referral for a background check for fingerprinting to getting a report from the state is 3 days. In South Dakota, it averages 5-7 days. In ND, the whole fingerprinting process and criminal background check delays are the result of many different steps. First, it is difficult to get an appointment to get fingerprinted (average 12 days in Fargo). When the fingerprint is returned to the provider and then mailed to the DHHH, the average response is 11 days. This results in a 3 to 4 week delay from time of initial referral for fingerprinting to getting results on an instate applicant. As a result of these delays, as many as 50% of childcare applicants in some areas have obtained employment by the time the background checks are completed.

This bill simply requires the ND Department of Health and Human Services to establish a background check infrastructure for childcare employees that is timely and responsive to providers and applicants.

Thank you for your interest in this bill. I hope you will seriously consider this as one of the ways we, as a state, can strengthen our workforce to help stabilize the childcare system.