

SB 2268 (2023 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY)  
SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HONORABLE JUDY LEE CHAIRMAN  
JANUARY 24, 2023 10:45 A.M.  
TESTIMONY OF BRUCE MURRY FOR FRASER LTD

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Bruce Murry, Lobbyist #330, representing Fraser LTD of Fargo, North Dakota.

Senate Bill 2268 seeks to preserve life-saving services to youth at risk. Services happen from a center in the Fargo area, but serve youth from around the state. As you will hear, this program was privately developed and private capital is being raised for the physical infrastructure. However, the number of youth at risk who need services has grown. Both before and after the pandemic, the severity of needs of youth continued to grow. The need of youth at risk in North Dakota, especially in Fargo, exceeds the operational fundraising capacity of a mid-sized nonprofit that has responsibilities to other vulnerable populations.

I would like to introduce the following persons to offer more detailed testimony and to answer your initial questions. I will get you back in touch with these experts if you have questions in the future.

Sandra Leyland, Chief Executive Officer of Fraser LTD;

Amanda Lindstrom, Independent Clinical Social Worker, Clinical Administrator, Valley Hope Counseling Center, Fraser LTD;

Erica Markle, Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker, Administrator, Fraser LTD;

Various letters from Fraser's Board of Directors and community supporters; and Youth with lived experience in the program — to be determined.

I now welcome Sandra Leyland to give an overview of the bill and Fraser's youth services. She will introduce her colleagues.

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As I've worked with Fraser to bring this proposal before you, some of the challenges facing these youth remind me of the travails of my own young adult children. However, we have relatively healthy extended families, graduate degrees, some savings, and have been blessed to avoid some of the most tragic and traumatic experiences. I am gratified this program exists to offer another chance to these young adults who probably lacked such informal supports. After all, North Dakota can ill afford to lose the help of one worker, or the beauty of any young citizen's life.