

Hello, my name is Carrie Varner and I'm the facilitator for Advocates Leading their Lives (ALL), a self-advocacy organization that is supported by the North Dakota Developmental Disabilities Council. I live in Bismarck, North Dakota and I'm in support of Senate Bill 2276.

There are many families in North Dakota who would benefit from paid family care, particularly those who have children with disabilities. Families of children who have children with disabilities often have little to no options available for childcare and they rely on families to help them with childcare so that they don't need to institutionalize their children. When families aren't able to pay their relatives for childcare, they often have to make very tough decisions, including whether they can continue working and being a contributing member to society as they have to stay home to watch their children or whether they'll be forced to put their loved one in an institutional level of care. Families shouldn't have to make those tough decisions when the option for paid family care is available. Paid family care will help families be able to continue being in the workforce, relieve the stress and tension that often comes with having little to no options for childcare for their disabled child, and will divert the need for institutionalization, thus saving the state money. Please support bill 2276, this will be a life saver for many families and will keep them together for as long as possible. I'm available for questions if needed.