



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2341

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
February 13, 2023

Madam Chair Lee and honorable members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

Our organization, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action, is submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2341 and respectfully requests that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

We certainly support the foster home program and deeply thank the families that make the decision to welcome children from broken homes into their families and lives. Foster children often need special attention that children who grew up in healthy family situations might not otherwise need. Because of this, we believe there should be a threshold on the number of children assigned per foster home, as the bill notes. As a state, we need to ensure that these children receive the attention and level of help they need to grow and flourish beyond the situations they came from.

This bill also addresses providing home treatment specific to meet the needs of youth at risk of or identified as victims of human trafficking. Since 2015, the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force has served over 700 victims of human trafficking in North Dakota¹. Approximately 29%, or 203 of those victims were minors, and these numbers don’t even include those that were not able to get the help that they needed. There is a documented problem with trafficking of minors in our state, and providing home treatment specific to their needs is an important tool to help them. In addition, this action would be advantageous in providing targeted help for those who have been in the foster system as children, but may no longer qualify based on age.

This bill is about children: foster children and youths who are victims or likely victims of human trafficking. We have an obligation as a state to provide help in these situations, and for this reason, we at North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action request a “DO PASS” on SB 2341.

Thank you for allowing us to testify and please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Mark Jorritsma
Executive Director

¹ <https://www.ndhttf.org/north-dakota-overview>

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