

Testimony Prepared for the
House Human Services Committee

January 27, 2025

By: Chelsea Flory, Burleigh County Human Service Zone Director

RE: HB 1564: Relating to Indian Child Welfare

Chair Ruby, Vice Chair Frelich and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Chelsea Flory. I serve as the Director of Burleigh County Human Service Zone, which includes the county of Burleigh. In addition, I am a member of the North Dakota Human Service Zone Director Association. I am here today to provide testimony in support of HB 1564.

Human Service Zones are the legal designee of the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS), managing a range of critical responsibilities including the legal custody of children in the public foster care system and foster care case management services. North Dakotans deeply value child safety, and this bill reflects that intent.

This bill supports the application of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1974. It helps Tribal and Zone child welfare team members meet safety needs for Native American children who are impacted by abuse or neglect.

We believe all other additions to the bill align with current practice, policy, and the Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM), adopted in 2020 as part of social services redesign (SB 2124). This model ensures consistent, evidence-based practices across all Human Service Zones, focusing on child safety while respecting parental rights.

I urge a “do pass” on HB 1564. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. I stand for any questions from the committee.