

Senate Bill 2176
Lt. Governor Michelle Strinden
Senate Human Services Committee
Sen. Judy Lee, chair
January 28, 2025, 9:00 AM
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

Good morning, Senator Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee. For the record, my name is Michelle Strinden, Lieutenant Governor for the State of North Dakota. I am here to provide our support for SB 2176, which proposes to move the administration of the Children's Cabinet into the Office of the Governor.

- I served as chair of the cabinet for nearly two years.
- During that time, I recognized the need for intentional focus and support to drive the cabinet to support children's systems.
- Moving the cabinet's administration within the Governor's Office will place additional focus on the cabinet and accelerate progress for children and families.
- We've partnered with an external consulting service that supported the development of a strategic plan and actionable goals.
- Working with the consultants, we'll continue to develop measures of success and working groups to dive deeper into issues across juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health continuum, education, early childhood and much more.
- Both the previous and current administrations have been engaged in supporting this effort. Both budget proposals included a line item that supports the cabinet with consultants and costs related to meetings, administration, document preparation, and other expenses.

- The Armstrong budget recommends \$100,000 dollars, including \$65,000 to support the cabinet's administration with facilitation consultants and \$35,000 in ongoing appropriations for supportive services to continue the cabinet's efforts.

I would like to introduce Meghan McCann and Dana Kunzman with The Forum of Youth Initiative to walk through the national landscape of state Children's Cabinets and walk through the North Dakota strategic plan.