

**SB 2190**  
**Senate Human Services**  
**Monday, January 20, 2025**  
**Senator Judy Lee, Chair**

Chair Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee:

My name is Roxane Romanick and I am here in support of SB 2190 as a representative of Designer Genes of North Dakota. I'm representing Designer Genes of North Dakota, Inc. Designer Genes' membership represents individuals with Down syndrome and their families across the state of North Dakota. Designer Genes' mission is to strengthen opportunities for individuals with Down syndrome and those who support them to earn, learn, and belong.

SB 2190 expands access to Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services to assess and treat common behavioral challenges across the lifespan for individuals with a variety of psychological and medical diagnoses. Children and adults with Down syndrome face unique behavioral challenges which can include frustration stemming from communication difficulties, difficulty adapting to daily routines and transitions, and the need to increase independence with medial needs and equipment such as CPAP machines, hearing aids, and glasses. ABA has been shown to be effective in addressing these challenges, promoting positive behavioral changes, and skill development.<sup>1</sup> Research specific to Down syndrome continues to emerge, the broader evidence for ABA's success in addressing behavioral issues across diagnoses strongly supports its application to individuals with Down syndrome.<sup>23</sup> While not specific to Medicaid coverage, every state has mandated insurance coverage for ABA services for individuals with Autism. A handful of states also include developmental disabilities in the language and Florida amended their autism mandate to include Down syndrome.<sup>4</sup>

I have witnessed the potential of individuals with Down syndrome when they have access to the right tools and supports. ABA can be one such tool—an evidence-based approach that equips individuals and their families with strategies to navigate complex challenges and empower our loved ones to succeed. Currently, restrictive eligibility criteria in ND Medicaid limit access to ABA services, leaving families of individuals with Down syndrome and other medical diagnoses without these supports. Expanding coverage to include these populations aligns with principles of equity and inclusion. It ensures that no family is left behind simply because their loved one's diagnosis falls outside a certain criterion.

This bill has the potential to transform lives, empowering individuals with Down syndrome and other medical diagnoses to thrive in their communities. I ask your support of SB 2190. Thank you for your time.

Roxane Romanick  
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<sup>1</sup> [A Meta-Analysis of Single-Case Research on Applied Behavior Analytic Interventions for People With Down Syndrome - PubMed](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Understanding Behavioral Challenges | Global Down Syndrome Foundation](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://cdn.down-syndrome.org/pubs/a/perspectives-316.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [More States Requiring Insurers To Cover Developmental Disabilities](#)