

DATE: February 6, 2025

TO: Members of the Senate

FROM: Governor's Brain Injury Advisory Council, JoNell Bakke, Chair

RE: Testimony for Bill 2308

I am writing this Memo on behalf of the Governor's Brain Injury Advisory Council in support of Senate Bill 2308. The work that has been done by this Advisory Council has been meaningful and we have been able to establish a support network for those North Dakota Citizens who are living with brain injuries every day.

The work has included the following:

- Establishment of a state plan to address the continuing needs of individuals with Brain Injuries. This includes work groups that are addressing the major objectives on the state plan.
- Education seminars and training sessions for law enforcement, educators, social services employees and others.
- Support groups for individuals with brain injuries and their families
- Collection of data that allows us to determine where services are needed in the state.
- Discussion about the development of a brain injury register.
- Working in collaboration with other states across the country on services and training opportunities for agencies working with Brain Injury Clients.
- The establishment of the Brain Injury Network which provides on-going support to all affected by Brain Injuries.
- Grant applications to the federal government for financial assistance for our ongoing work.

It is our intent to continue the Brain Injury Advisory Council under the Department of Health and Human Services if eliminated from the Governor Appointment Council list. We feel that our work should continue in order to serve the needs of the State of North Dakota and its citizens. Our most appropriate placement would be under the Behavioral Health Division.