

February 5, 2025

Honorable Senators Wobbema, Axtman, Boschee, Larson and Powers,

I am writing in **support** of SB 2306, which relates to the establishment of a child care workforce recruitment and retention program.

Minot's City Council created a standing committee that directly researches and defines needs in our community that are related to childcare. The committee is made up of childcare providers, parents, elected officials, business owners and city staff. Over the past 18 months we have discovered several needs related to the shortage of childcare providers in our area. Recruitment and retention of quality childcare workers is top on the list. Reasons for the shortages certainly include low pay and limited, if any, benefits for workers. Many potential childcare workers may have young children of their own and paying for childcare, on a limited income, is nearly impossible.

SB 2306 will provide incentive payments to eligible childcare providers who will have the ability to increase pay for their workers. We have heard testimony from many providers who are willing to expand their services if they can employ the right number of workers.

It is our committee's belief that economic development, support for our next generation and overall community livability begin and end with quality childcare. SB 2306 is a positive step towards achieving that goal.

Thank you for your consideration of the passage of SB 2306.

Respectfully,
Lisa Olson
Minot City Council Vice President
Committee on Childcare, Chair