



## Letter of Support – SB 2306

Thursday, February 6, 2025

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

For the record, my name is Katherine Grindberg, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Executive Vice President for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 2306.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. First, I would like to express our gratitude for the 68<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly's leadership in advancing critical investments into childcare and their commitment to addressing affordability through attracting and retaining quality professionals to serve as childcare providers. Childcare is a workforce issue. Our continued economic growth won't be possible without proper support for this essential industry.

Due to the unique nature of the industry, for childcare providers to increase their capacity for slots they must also increase staff. Many providers face the challenge of long wait lists and difficulty recruiting and retaining their workforce. Programs such as this would alleviate a portion of the cost burden of opening additional slots, especially increasing capacity for infants and toddlers, where ratios require more staff per child.

High prices associated with childcare have made the cost of this care unattainable for many families. Between 2017-2024 the cost of childcare in North Dakota increased 40% at traditional day care centers, and as much as 50% at home day care centers. Additional increases would be difficult for North Dakota families to shoulder. To attract and retain the workforce that fuels our industries such as agriculture, healthcare, technology, and manufacturing, the availability of affordable childcare is key. By offering additional incentives and programs for childcare, the state can provide support to lower costs and expand access for North Dakota families.

Passage of this bill offers additional support to North Dakota's working families, demonstrating the state's commitment to investing in our future. Addressing North Dakota's childcare shortage is a vital part of solving the workforce issue. We urge the committee to give this bill a DO PASS.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to North Dakota.  
Sincerely,

Katherine Grindberg,  
Executive Vice President  
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce