

2019 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES

SB 2242

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Red River Room, State Capitol

SB 2242
1/21/2019
Job # 31090

- Subcommittee
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Justin Velez / Pam Dever

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

To provide an appropriation to the department of human services for grants to children's advocacy centers.

Minutes:

Attachments #1-4

Vice Chairman Larsen: Opens the hearing for SB 2242

Madam Chair Lee, Dist. 13, W. Fargo: Introduces SB 2242 and gives a brief description. I think these are important tools. This is additional funds for them. I am in the advisory board. This is not the only appropriation they get. They don't want to stop doing these things, but need money. (2.24)

(02:29-09:47) Paula Condol, Director – N.D. Children's Advocacy Centers, Executive Director - Dakota Children's Advocacy Center. Testifying in favor of SB 2242. Please see **Attachment #1** for testimony.

Senator O. Larsen: Do you know what the budget costs are in other states?

Paula Condol: That's a hard question because there are so many variations in sizes of states. There's Illinois and Texas who, in their chapter alone, has a several million-dollar budget. I can get you a report from the national office that shows what states are getting as support from their state, but it varies significantly by state.

Madam Chair Lee: I would imagine even things like distance and rural areas. Those kinds of factors, that's different from Delaware as an example.

Paula Condol: There's places like Chicago the hire hundreds of people and I only have four, so it just varies.

Madam Chair Lee: Any information on the cost per child served on the average? Or did you want the whole report, Senator O. Larsen?

Senator O. Larsen: I guess that would be easier for you guys. My wife started a program like this in Sacramento. It was the first of its kind, I think it was 25 years ago with 1.2 million people living there, and that was only a program there that offered that. It would just be interesting to see what the population and number size was and what funded the program for.

Madam Chair Lee: Is this something you can print out?

Paula Condol: I can ask the national office, and they can e-mail the results to me and I can get the information for you.

Madam Chair Lee: That would be great, thank you. Our clerk can provide copies if you mail him. Any further testimony?

(12:10-14:34) Jonathan Byers on behalf of the Attorney General. Testifying in favor of SB 2242. Please see **Attachment #2** for testimony. Any questions.

Senator O. Larsen: Was there a lot of pushback on this when it was starting to be developed in North Dakota.

Jonathan Byers: I wouldn't say it was push-back. I don't think everybody knew at first the value that it would have and so there was always a question of was it worth spending the money to do this. So, not so much push-back just not buy-in. Now we have a track record where we can see how well it works, and it's a lot easier to sell that, than it was when it started.

(16:05-18:30) Tisha Scheuer, Executive Director - Central Dakota Forensic Nurse Examiners: Testifying in favor of SB 2242. Please see **Attachment #3** for testimony.

(18:50-23:25) Marina Sphar, Senior Assist. States Attorney - Burleigh County. Testifying in favor of SB 2242. Testimony is as follows:

There are numerous values that the CAC has for Burleigh county and for prosecuting cases, its critical and vital for us. When we have a child abuse case and often there's sex abuse cases. One of the portions of the interview process that happens at the CAC is that it is recorded and the forensic interviewer is taught to have neutral non-leading questions. That type of interview is absolutely invaluable. When we go to court, there's a lot less ways that it can be attacked by a defense attorney. I'm lucky enough that in Burleigh County, that after we have a jury trial, I get to talk to the jury if they want me to. On these cases, the jury inevitably says your best witness, aside from the victim, was the forensic interviewer. We learn so much from them, and I know that when I walk out of that court room, and the jury starts deliberating, the jury's first question they have for the judge is, can we see the forensic interview again. They listen and they hang on those words. We also have a phenomenal success rate with guilty verdicts because of that. If I don't have a forensic interview in a case, it's always a detriment. I was a small town State's Attorney for many years. The CAC's are even more valuable in those counties, because they don't have the resources or the interview rooms. Sometimes the counties have great interview skills and sometimes they don't. All of those sex abuse cases for me always went to a CAC in one of the other cities like Fargo or Bismarck from where we were at. What do I see as the value for the children

and the families that is also immeasurable. There are all kinds of different services. One of the things that I look at as an attorney is how do we help these children not be victims again, so that they are not victims in the case later on down the road. They are often in a place where not only are they facing the sexual abuse but they are looking at families where there is drug and alcohol abuse; there may also be violence. The services the CAC provides for those children so that not only are we helping the children, we are also helping save some money in our criminal justice system, if we can address their needs so they don't have to come back. Finally, I am on the advisory board for the CAC and one of the things that I know is that the CAC is not any kind of a private organization that receives funding. Their funding comes from what the state has agreed to provide them which are grants and donations and that is it. I know that our director here in Bismarck spends the majority of her time trying to get money for the budget and trying to keep the doors open; trying to keep the place running. And with more funding, she could take a little bit of a breath and maybe not have to work 60-70 hours a week, and actually get down to more of the business of running a CAC like having more interviewers, social workers, and counselors to handle the amount of children that we see. It is critical for us to have interviews done in a timely fashion. When we have these investigations. We need to have these interviews before a child has some intervening push to change their testimony. We need to have those interviews to provide to defense attorneys for speedy trials and for all of those different things. I ask that this committee also supports this fund raising and let the CAC continue and to flourish at what they do and provide care for more children. Thank you.

Senator O. Larsen: I was wondering is the funding just going to the interviewing process or is this going to cover items as well? (24.06)

(24:11) Paula Condol: Currently, the funding that we utilize, we can use that to cover any of our positions, and I encourage us to continue to do that. Typically, a CAC would have a director who, in several other cases, will provide direct services like counseling to children as well. The forensic interviewer, and we have an advocate on staff and the medical services.

Madam Chair Lee: This bill does not limit it, but it just adds to the appropriation because as you expand services you may or may not need additional facilities for example.

Senator K. Roers: I'm not sure if you know the exact number but, do you know what the appropriation was that was in the DHS budget to add?

Paula Condol: I believe we are at currently at \$ 1 million dollars, and that covers \$150,000 per facility each year. There is a state chapter that provides training and technical assistance, and they give us 50,000 dollars a year to run a state chapter.

(25:55-26:24) Anna Frissell, Director of the Red River Children's Advocacy Center (RRCAC), Fargo: Testifying in favor of SB 2242. Please see **Attachment #4** for testimony.

Senator Anderson: I think it would help the committee if we could see the budget of one of the children's advocacy centers. We could see how much money comes the state, etc.

Anna: We will coordinate a response for that. (27.27)

(27:51-30:03) Steve Riser, Social Service Director of Dakota Central Services, N.D. County Social Services Director, Government Board of Bismarck CAC: Testifying in favor of SB 2242. We at Social Services consider the CAC a very important partner in dealing with the safety of children and the treatment afterwards. Without the CAC, we would have to depend on our staff to try and do interviews. We are not trained that well. If you are in a rural area, you may only see a few cases. To have the CAC available that has trained staff is a real specialization. If you remember the testimony in SB2124, they talked about pilots they are running for Social Services. One of those pilots is child protection. The pilot is attempting to is try to get a decision from over 60 days, down to 25 days. By having enough staff at CAC, we will be able to accomplish that goal. If we do not have staff, we will have to put off those times when data will be the same. Currently, we have a wait list of 2 months. Extra funding would really help. Any questions?

Senator Anderson: When you have a case in a county, do you transport the child or does the group come up?

Steve: Typically, we bring the children to the Bismarck CAC because they have recording equipment necessary. We are always in attendance and usually someone from law enforcement is there as well. As far as transporting the children, at times our staff does it, but sometimes families bring. (31.15)

Senator Hogan: What percentage of the overall CPS reports get referred to the advocacy centers?

Steve: I don't have any exact numbers, but I would say that in our agency, that we are probably using the CAC about 15-20% of the time.

Madam Chair Lee: Those recorded interviews can be used in court instead of the child facing the accuser in court. That is a big deal. Any more questions? Thank you. Any more in favor? Any against? Any neutral? This hearing is closed. (33.01)

Senator O. Larsen moves to motion a **DO PASS, REREFER TO APPROPRIATIONS.**
Senator K. Roers **Seconded** the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE TAKEN

6 YEA, 0 NAY, 0 ABSENT

MOTION CARRIES AS DO PASS, REREFER TO APPROPRIATIONS

Senator O. Larsen will carry SB 2242 to the floor.

**2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
 ROLL CALL VOTES
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2242**

Senate Human Services Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: _____

Recommendation: Adopt Amendment
 Do Pass Do Not Pass Without Committee Recommendation
 As Amended Rerefer to Appropriations
 Place on Consent Calendar
 Other Actions: Reconsider _____

Motion Made By Sen. O. Larsen Seconded By Sen. K. Roers

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chair Lee	X		Senator Hogan	X	
Vice Chair Larsen	X				
Senator Anderson	X				
Senator Clemens	X				
Senator Roers	X				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Sen. O. Larsen

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2242: Human Services Committee (Sen. J. Lee, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2242 was rereferred to the **Appropriations Committee**.

2019 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2242

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee
Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2242
1/28/2019
Job # 31541

- Subcommittee
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature Rose Laning / Florence Mayer
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Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of human services for grants to children's advocacy centers.

Minutes:

Testimony Attached # 1 - 5

Legislative Council: Brady Larson
OMB: Becky Keller

Chairman Holmberg: Called the committee to order on SB 2242.

Senator Judy Lee, District 13, West Fargo

No written testimony.

Introducing bill and the people involved. This bill asks for addition funding, this additional \$600,000 would cover the volume of cases they now have.

Paula Condol, Director, Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota:

Testified in favor of SB 2242. Testimony Attached #1.

Also submitted written testimony Attachment #2 - **Tisha Scheuer, Executive Director, Central Dakota Forensic Nurse Examiners, Bismarck, ND**

Attachment #3 - **Hasan Buker, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, Minot State University.**

(10:50) Senator Mathern: What is the actual number of children you'll be able to see with the appropriation and this additional 600,000? Is there a chart or outline?

Paula Condol: That's hard to answer. Situations go to Law Enforcement and they go to us for referral. Right now it's scheduled out until we can see them. My next slot will be in 6 weeks. There are cases where they can't wait that long. The numbers have increased exponentially. 91% increase in the last 10 years. I visited with Dickinson, our satellite office. We would have staff that are housed there. They are only sending 30% of the kids because we can't handle them all right now.

Senator Bekkedahl: What's being done in Williston area? Gone from 25,000 people to over 55,000 people. With the increase of sex trafficking, and a lot of people moving in and out with oil. What are you doing in that area? Do you have any forward looking plans for that community?

Paula Condol: We used to have a satellite, but numbers were too great to sustain that. There biggest obstacle would be funding. Our funding means you are accredited member and meeting certain standards. They're starting that process and we're hoping to be a better model.

Senator Dever: You have 3 accredited CACs (Children's Advocacy Centers) and 3 regionally placed satellites. They are currently funded at \$150,000 per CAC, so it that \$450,000? And then does the bill replace or increase that?

Paula Condol: Correct. There's no money set aside for the satellites. This would add an additional \$100,000 to each CAC per year.

Senator Dever: We hear these tragic stories all the time, but we don't hear of people being convicted. Curious how these lead to convictions?

(15:35) Paula Condol: People that go to CAC, have higher rate of successful prosecution. Only 15% of cases get prosecuted. Once they actually make it there, we have a might success rate.

(16:25) Anna Frissell, Director, Red River Children's Advocacy Center (RRCAC)
Testified in support of SB 2242, Attachment # 4.

(20:44) Senator Bekkedahl: You discussed the satellites getting assistance from larger centers. As in staffing or just outreach? And then a local 501C3 take the lead. Is that something I can assist in, in my home town. I serve on a youth foundation board; we have assets that could be helpful. Is there a place where we can work with others in Williston?

Anna Frissell: It isn't necessary for a CAC to be a 501c3. There are 850, all are organized different. Ours happen to be 501c3, but it's recent. Previously affiliated with Sanford Health Systems. Paula is in touch with Williston folks, getting together with interested people in the community and finding available resources will help.

(22:52) Jonathan Byers, Assistant Attorney General, North Dakota Attorney General's Office: Testified in support for SB2242. Attachment #5.

Chairman Holmberg: Closed the hearing on SB 2242.

Same sub-committee as DHS - SB 2012

Senator Dever: This bill has merit, but better included in the budget.

Chairman Holmberg: Brady can you have someone put together a schedule for us? And work with Senator Grabinger on our recommendation for state employees.

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2242
2/15/2019
JOB # 32827

- Subcommittee
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Alice Delzer

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for DHS re: Grants to children's advocacy centers (Do Not Pass.)

Minutes:

No testimony submitted

Chairman Holmberg: Called the Committee to order on SB 2026. All committee members were present. Adam Mathiak, Legislative Council and Becky Deichert, OMB were also present.

Chairman Holmberg: We're following the model we did two years ago, when we had that duplicative series of bills, they were all Appropriation bills and the rules do not allow for that, but the rules are suspendable. So last time, what happened is we brought 25 bills up to the floor, the motion was Senator Klein moved to suspend Joint Rule 206 through the 17th legislative day, which motion prevailed, and then the second reading of Senate bills on the consent calendar for all 24 votes went as one vote and we were done. My understanding according to talking to John Bjornson this morning is we can in committee have a motion that we would list the bills that we are putting on the consent calendar for a Do Not Pass and then we would vote on that, one vote, and then they would go up on the consent calendar. If you recall, we also have two bills in there that had been signed and they had to do with the Attorney General's budget that the items were folded into the budget. So, before we do it we need to have someone from the committee move that we do a Do Not Pass and place these bills on the consent calendar, as these bills are now duplicative to SB 2012.

The list is as follows:

- SB 2026 - Do Not Pass – Improving Mental Health Services
- SB 2028 - Do Not Pass - Behavioral Health Prevention & Early Intervention Services
- SB 2029 - Do Not Pass – Implementation of Community Behavioral Health Program
- SB 2030 - Do Not Pass - Relating to State's Behavioral Health System
- SB 2031 - Do Not Pass - Targeted Case Management Services
- SB 2032 - Do Not Pass - Peer Support Specialist Certification
- SB 2168 - Do Not Pass - Adjustments to QSP Rates
- SB 2175 - Do Not Pass - Substance Use Disorder Treatment Voucher System
- SB 2298 - Do Not Pass - 1915(i) Medicaid State Plan Amendment for Children
- SB 2242 - Do Not Pass – Grants to children's advocacy centers.

Chairman Holmberg: Committee members you may think when the budget comes it is rich, but the bottom line is they are putting the entire issues regarding these bills on the same table. If someone would make the following motion that the Appropriations Committee put a Do Not Pass and place on the consent calendar.

V. Chairman Wanzek: Moved a Do Not Pass and place on the consent calendar on the afore-mentioned bills. 2nd by V. Chairman Krebsbach.

Chairman Holmberg: Call the roll on a Do Not Pass and place them on the consent calendar on the afore-mentioned bills.

A Roll Call vote was taken. Yea: 14; Nay: 0; Absent: 0.

Chairman Holmberg: I did talk to John in Legislative Council and if the front desk has a problem have them call up to Legislative Council and they will say it is fine. **I Will carry the consent calendar.**

Senator Dever: This will be on Monday but SB 2012 will be on Tuesday.

Chairman Holmberg: The only other thing with this is, keep in mind that any senator has the right to pull a bill off the consent calendar and have a debate on this. the two from the Attorney General are already on the consent calendar. This will just join them. I believe there are two more bills that you passed, SB 2106 and SB 2191, Let's hear about them. (These bills were assigned to new jobs.)

The hearing was closed.

Date: 2-15-2019

Roll Call Vote #: 1

**2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2242**

Senate Appropriations Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: 2026, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032
2168, 2175, 2298, 2242

Recommendation: Adopt Amendment
 Do Pass Do Not Pass Without Committee Recommendation
 As Amended Rerefer to Appropriations
 Place on Consent Calendar

Other Actions: Reconsider _____

Motion Made By Wanzek Seconded By Krebsbach

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Holmberg	✓		Senator Mathern	✓	
Senator Krebsbach	✓		Senator Grabinger	✓	
Senator Wanzek	✓		Senator Robinson	✓	
Senator Erbele	✓				
Senator Poolman	✓				
Senator Bekkedahl	✓				
Senator G. Lee	✓				
Senator Dever	✓				
Senator Sorvaag	✓				
Senator Oehlke	✓				
Senator Hogue	✓				

Total (Yes) 14 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Holmberg

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2242: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS and BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2242 was placed on the Tenth order on the calendar.

2019 TESTIMONY

SB 2242

Senate Human Services Committee
Testimony In Support of Senate Bill #2242
1-21-19

SB 2242
1/21/19
#1 pg. 1
A # 1

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee.

For the record, my name is Paula Condol. I am the Director for the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota and the Executive Director of the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center, here in Bismarck. I am here today to ask for your support for Senate Bill 2242.

The Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota (or CAC's) provide a compassionate and effective way to bring services to children and families affected by abuse. Our collaboration with multidisciplinary team members significantly reduces the trauma associated with child abuse and improves case outcomes. We help coordinate care and investigation from the first report to conviction and beyond, while keeping the child at the center of everything the team does. This multidisciplinary team brings professionals from social services, law enforcement, prosecution, victim advocacy and the medical and mental health communities together so that a child only has to tell of his or her abuse one time, and so that we can build better case and start that child on the road to healing. The CAC model is seen as the gold standard response to child abuse across the country at over 800 CAC's, in all 50 states. Including three CAC's in ND, covering six regionally placed sites; one in Bismarck, Dickinson, Minot, Fargo, Belcourt and Grand Forks. In 2018, we served 2628 children and family members who have been affected by abuse and provided 21,486 services to them.

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~12/1/19
#1 pg. 2
A # # 1

It is estimated there are 42 million survivors of child sexual abuse in the US and research tells us that 60% of victims never tell^{1,2}. Additionally, nearly half of all U.S. children experience at least one type of childhood trauma³. Child abuse happens in North Dakota. Every year our centers see children that are sexually abused, beaten and threatened. They have witnessed violence and at times been exploited through pornography and trafficking. CAC's offer environments that are free of intimidation. This welcoming atmosphere makes the situation less stressful for the child and as a result they may be more open to sharing their horrific experiences.

Why does this all matter? We know that child trauma can last a lifetime. Many studies have shown the strong relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), which include childhood trauma like abuse, and serious outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance use, health problems, and even poverty and early death. Additionally, abuse carries a heavy cost. The lifetime cost for each victim is \$210,012 and each year, the total lifetime costs of new cases of child abuse reach approximately \$124 billion⁴. CAC's work to lessen this trauma, to help heal those who have it, and in the long run help to save money.

So what is a Children's Advocacy Center? To understand this, you must understand what children face without one. Without a CAC, the child may end up having to tell the worst story of his or her life over and over again, to doctors, cops, lawyers, therapists, investigators, judges, and others. They may have to talk about that traumatic experience in a police station where they think they might be in trouble, or may be asked the wrong questions by a well-meaning teacher or other adult that could hurt the case against the abuser, CAC's offer a neutral, child

friendly environment where law enforcement or child protective services can refer children suspected of being abused. At the CAC, the child tells their story once to a trained interviewer who knows the right questions to ask in a way that does not re-traumatize the child. Then, the multidisciplinary team make decisions together about how to help the child based on the interview. CACs offer evidenced based, trauma informed mental health services and medical exams, plus courtroom preparation, victim advocacy, case management, and other services.

As non-profit organizations, CAC's are dependent on the generosity of the communities we serve. Our services are provided at no cost to children and families. We are funded through grants, foundations, and community support. This includes our state funded appropriation, which is currently at \$150,000 per CAC per year. By far the majority of our expenses go to supporting direct services for children and families impacted by abuse. We are focused on providing accessible services in a safe and family-friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing. Unfortunately, our capacity to provide these services has been deeply affected by the growing needs of our state. In the past 10 years, our services to victims and families have increased an astonishing 91%, while our state appropriation has increased just 33%. During that same time period our CAC's sites have increased from 2 accredited CAC's to 3 accredited CAC's and 3 regionally placed satellites (or 67%). This was an intentional effort to spread out our services across the state so that we are more accessible, not only to victims and their families, but also our team partners, while still being able to maintain expertise. In those 10 years, I still have the same number of staff, despite that 91% increase, and we have come to a point where we simply can't continue to do more. This past year, it was standard to have a 2-month waitlist for an appointment. That meant that children had to wait to tell their story, to start to heal, and at times to be

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~1/21/19
#1 pg. 4

AH #1

safe. Often times, our satellite sites are affected the most. My satellite center in Dickinson has a zero budget. We operate off of a donated space that is available to us one day a week and the dedication and passion from staff and team members to just do what we can. When there are holidays or snow storms services can't happen, and as we all know child abuse doesn't just happen on Mondays, when our satellite is open. It is critical now that we receive much needed funding to meet this increased capacity. Senate Bill 2242 will provide a \$600,000 increase to our appropriation to the CAC's across the state to help us meet the growing need of abused children.

I have had the privilege to work with the CAC's for nearly 19 years now and I have seen and heard many things that a person shouldn't have to experience. I have listened to a 11-year-old pregnant child, watched a 6-year-old shake as she recalled a witnessed murder, calmed an 11-year-old as she relived a belt tightening around her neck as she heard the words "I'm going to kill you" and seen the wounds of an iron on a leg. I have seen children who have had their bones broken and others their spirit and hope. However, I have also seen a child's eyes light up when they realize that you might be able to help them and their smile when they know that they will be okay. I have felt the graciousness of their trust and the huge responsibility of their safety. CAC's were developed to ensure that children are not further victimized by the systems intended to protect them. These children come to us, often times broken and scared. Some offer their stories to us, with hopes that we as a multidisciplinary team can help them and it's because of this growing need that we are requesting additional funding to help us meet capacity and to better serve kids across the entire state.

Children's Advocacy Centers in ND play a critical role in ensuring the safety of abused children. We greatly appreciate the support and confidence the Legislature

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1/21/19
#1 Pg. 5
Att #1

has in the services we provide. I am the first to wish our centers could close our doors and go out of business, but until we can do so knowing that NO child in North Dakota needs our help, I ask you for your continued and additional support.

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today and I will be happy to try and answer any of your questions.

1. London, K., Bruck, M., Ceci, S., & Shuman, D. (2003) Disclosure of child sexual abuse: What does the research tell us about the ways that children tell? *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 11(1), 194-226.
2. Ullman, S. E. (2007). Relationship to perpetrator, disclosure, social reactions, and PTSD symptoms in child sexual abuse survivors. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 16(1), 19-36.
3. Bethell, C, Newacheck, P, Hawes, E, Halfon, N. Adverse childhood experiences: assessing the impact on health and school engagement and the mitigating role of resilience. (2014) *Health Affairs Dec*; 33(12);210-2016
4. Fang, X., Brown, D., Florence, C., & Mercy, J. (2012). The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Volume 36, Issue 2, February 2012, Pages 156-165

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#2 pg. 1

**SENATE BILL 2242 TESTIMONY
SENATE HUMAN SERVICES
January 21, 2019
RED RIVER ROOM**

By Jonathan Byers, Assistant Attorney General

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jonathan Byers and I appear on behalf of the Attorney General. I wish to offer the Attorney General's support for the concept of legislative recognition and support for children's advocacy centers.

We live and work in a climate of heightened awareness and public scrutiny of the way that the criminal justice system handles sex offenders. As legislators you have seen, and will continue to see, various bills relating to sexual offender sentencing, supervision, registration, and civil commitment.

All of those measures depend on the successful detection, investigation, and apprehension of the perpetrators of sexual crimes in North Dakota. My success as a sexual abuse prosecutor hinges on the quality investigation of such crimes.

Professionals around the nation have developed a better way of responding to allegations of sexual abuse. Through the use of children's advocacy centers, children are interviewed by trained forensic professionals and are examined by physicians with the expertise to recognize signs of physical and sexual abuse. All of this occurs in a child and family-friendly environment that better serves the immediate and long-term needs of an abused child.

Occasionally, through circumstance or lack of awareness, I see encounter an investigation done the old way—a frightened child interviewed by a police officer wearing a badge and a gun, or an exam conducted by an emergency room doctor who wants to stay out of court at all costs. The fulfillment of these important responsibilities by specially trained professionals should not be left solely to the chance of a well-written grant application.

As Legislators, you'll again have tough decisions to make about where tax dollars are best allocated. It is my heartfelt belief that every dollar that goes to a North Dakota Children's Advocacy Center is a dollar well spent. I would be happy to answer any questions.

CENTRAL DAKOTA FORENSIC NURSE EXAMINERS

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill #2242 1-21-2019

Mr. Chairman and Committee members,

My name is Tisha Scheuer. I am the Executive Director of the Central Dakota Forensic Nurse Examiners in Bismarck, ND. Our specialty is providing medical forensic care for adolescents, adults, as well as children who experience sexual assault or abuse and physical abuse.

I have been a nurse for 24 years, a forensic nurse for 15 of those years and recently became a Family Nurse Practitioner. I am here to speak in support of Senate Bill 2242. My role with the Dakota Child Advocacy Center of Bismarck, is to provide consultation for children in the Bismarck region who are suspected of experiencing abuse which may include physical abuse and/or sexual abuse, and neglect. I see children, 0-18 years of age, at the Advocacy Center.

As you are aware, the children with whom participate in the services at Child advocacy Centers are children who have experienced unspeakable trauma and who have a long road ahead of them in

CENTRAL DAKOTA
FORENSIC NURSE
EXAMINERS



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CENTRAL DAKOTA FORENSIC NURSE EXAMINERS

terms of long-term effects. This includes PTSD, depression, anxiety, developmental delays, and physical illnesses. These children require complicated coordination of care that requires multiple agencies to be involved. The child advocacy center is the single agency with who coordinates these services. That is the role of the Children's Advocacy Centers. Without these centers the care would be fragmented, and incomplete. That approach the Child Advocacy Centers provide give the children the opportunity to receive care, not only to physically heal, which is my role, but to heal emotionally along with their families.

With the Children's Advocacy Centers coordination, the care also becomes focused on how to help both the child and family and to assist them with learning how to become a healthy family unit.



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CENTRAL DAKOTA FORENSIC NURSE EXAMINERS

By supporting the work the Children's Advocacy Centers provide, we will continue to see a higher quality of care and healthier long term outcomes for the victims of abuse and neglect.

I urge a do pass on SB 2242.



Tisha Scheuer, MSN, APRN, SANE-A, FNP-C

Senate Human Services Committee
Testimony In Support of Senate Bill 2242
January 21, 2019

For the record, my name is Anna Frissell. I am the director of the Red River Children's Advocacy Center (RRCAC), with offices in Fargo and Grand Forks. We serve children who are alleged to be the victims of sexual and physical abuse, neglect and exploitation and their families from up and down the Red River Valley. I am testifying today in support of Senate Bill 2242.

Although Children's Advocacy Center's play an important role in our criminal justice, mental health and medical systems, they are not moneymakers. Currently the North Dakota Centers cobble together the needed funding in large part from foundations, grants, fundraisers and donations.

In 2007, the North Dakota Legislature provided the initial appropriation for the work of the Children's Advocacy Centers. At that time, the RRCAC provided services to 356 children, offering 763 services to these children and their families. In 2018, we served 644 children and offered nearly 7,000 services to these children and their families. As Paula's testimony demonstrated, all the North Dakota Children's Advocacy Centers have seen this kind of growth in the need for their services. We are glad to see more children and families referred to the RRCAC (to all the CACs) and we want to have top notch services to offer them.

We continue to reach out to individuals and the private sector for support, and we have managed to sustain our Centers to meet the growth we have experienced, but to keep doing our work dedicated to the public safety of our state's most vulnerable citizens, we need this additional funding.

The additional \$100,000 appropriation per year, for each Center over the next biennium will help us to continue to reach out to our rural counties: to ensure all cases that should be seen by a CAC have that opportunity and not just the most severe cases. Furthermore, this funding will assist our Centers to provide prevention education and resources to families in all our counties, mental health and advocacy services (i.e. counseling and reimbursement for family's travel to the center), training for professionals, forensic interviewing services, case management and case review.

We are proud partners of child protection workers, advocacy professionals, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and mental health and medical personnel of our state, counties and local communities. We greatly appreciate the support and confidence the Legislature has in the services we provide. We all may wish that our Centers could close their doors and go out of business but until we can do that knowing that NO child in North Dakota needs our help, I ask for your continued support.

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank You.

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Senate Appropriations Committee
Testimony In Support of Senate Bill #2242
1-28-19

Chairman and Members of the Committee.

For the record, my name is Paula Condol. I am the Director for the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota and the Executive Director of the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center, here in Bismarck. I am here today to ask for your support for Senate Bill 2242.

So what is a Children's Advocacy Center? To understand this, you must understand what children face without one. Without a CAC, the child may end up having to tell the worst story of his or her life over and over again, to doctors, cops, lawyers, therapists, investigators, judges, and others. They may have to talk about that traumatic experience in a police station where they think they might be in trouble, or may be asked the wrong questions by a well-meaning teacher or other adult that could hurt the case against the abuser, CAC's offer a neutral, child friendly environment where law enforcement or child protective services can refer children suspected of being abused. At the CAC, the child tells their story once to a trained interviewer who knows the right questions to ask in a way that does not re-traumatize the child. Then, the multidisciplinary team, which is made up of law enforcement, social services, prosecution, advocates and medical and mental health professionals, make decisions together about how to help the child based on the interview. CACs offer evidenced based, trauma informed mental health services and medical exams, plus courtroom preparation, victim advocacy, case management, and other services.

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Why does this all matter?

- It is estimated there are 42 million survivors of child sexual abuse in the US and research tells us that 60% of victims never tell^{1, 2}.
- Nearly half of all U.S. children experience at least one type of childhood trauma³.
- We also know that child abuse happens in North Dakota. In 2018, we served 2628 children and family members who have been affected by abuse and provided 21,486 services to them.
- Child trauma can last a lifetime. Many studies have shown the strong relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), which include childhood trauma like abuse, and serious outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance use, health problems, and even poverty and early death. All of this carries a very heavy cost.
- The lifetime cost for each victim is \$210,012 and each year, the total lifetime costs of new cases of child abuse reach approximately \$124 billion⁴.
- Child victims of sexual abuse who receive services at CACs are twice as likely to receive specialized medical exams, and four times so in cases not involving penetration. Children seen at CACs are also more likely to receive referrals for specialized mental health treatment^{5,6,7}.
- We know CAC's save Money: Beyond common sense effects, there are real demonstrable cost-savings to using CAC's. A cost benefit analysis showed that traditional investigation cost 36% more than CAC collaborative investigations and that CAC's can save as much as \$1000, per child abuse case by streamlining the process.⁸
- In the past 10 years, our services to victims and families have increased an astonishing 91%, while our state appropriation has increased just 33%.

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- During that same time period our CAC's sites have increased from 2 accredited CAC's to 3 accredited CAC's and 3 regionally placed satellites, one in Bismarck, Dickinson, Minot, Fargo, Belcourt and Grand Forks (or 67%). This was an intentional effort to spread out our services across the state so that we are more accessible, not only to victims and their families, but also our team partners, while still being able to maintain expertise.
- 80% of states fund their CAC's through general or special revenue and on average this funding covers 34% of their overall budget. If this funding were received, the state portion of my local budget would still only be at 28%.

As non-profit organizations, CAC's are dependent on the generosity of the communities we serve. Our services are provided at no cost to children and families. We are funded through grants, foundations, and community support. This includes our state funded appropriation, which is currently at \$150,000 per CAC per year. By far the majority of our expenses go to supporting direct services for children and families impacted by abuse. We are focused on providing accessible services in a safe and family-friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing. Unfortunately, our capacity to provide these services has been deeply affected by the growing needs of our state. In the last 10 years, since our services have spiked, I still have the same number of staff, despite that 91% increase, and we have come to a point where we simply can't continue to do more. This past year, it was standard to have a 2-month waitlist for an appointment. That meant that children had to wait to tell their story, to start to heal, and at times to be safe. Often times, our satellite sites are affected the most. My satellite center in Dickinson has a zero budget. We operate off of a donated space that is available to us one day a week and the dedication and passion from staff and team members to just do what

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we can. When there are holidays or snow storms services can't happen, and as we all know child abuse doesn't just happen on Mondays, when our satellite is open.

It is critical now that we receive much needed funding to meet this increased capacity. Senate Bill 2242 will provide a \$600,000 increase to our appropriation to the CAC's across the state to help us meet the growing need of abused children. With this increase CAC's hope to staff satellite offices, increase mental health and forensic services and increase their physical space to meet the growing capacity.

I have had the privilege to work with the CAC's for nearly 19 years now and I have seen and heard many things that a person shouldn't have to experience. I have listened to a 11-year-old pregnant child, watched a 6-year-old shake as she recalled a witnessed murder, calmed an 11-year-old as she relived a belt tightening around her neck as she heard the words "I'm going to kill you" and seen the wounds of an iron on a leg. I have seen children who have had their bones broken and others their spirit and hope. However, I have also seen a child's eyes light up when they realize that you might be able to help them and their smile when they know that they will be okay. I have felt the graciousness of their trust and the huge responsibility of their safety. CAC's were developed to ensure that children are not further victimized by the systems intended to protect them. These children come to us, often times broken and scared. Some offer their stories to us, with hopes that we as a multidisciplinary team can help them and it's because of this growing need that we are requesting additional funding to help us meet capacity and to better serve kids across the entire state.

Children's Advocacy Centers in ND play a critical role in ensuring the safety of abused children. We greatly appreciate the support and confidence the Legislature has in the services we provide. I am the first to wish our centers could close our doors

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and go out of business, but until we can do so knowing that NO child in North Dakota needs our help, I ask you for your continued and additional support.

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today and I will be happy to try and answer any of your questions.

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CENTRAL DAKOTA FORENSIC NURSE EXAMINERS

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill #2242

Mr. Chairman and Committee members,

My name is Tisha Scheuer. I am the Executive Director of the Central Dakota Forensic Nurse Examiners in Bismarck, ND. Our specialty is providing medical forensic care for adolescents, adults, as well as children who experience sexual assault or abuse and physical abuse.

I have been a nurse for 24 years, a forensic nurse for 15 of those years and recently became a Family Nurse Practitioner. I am here to speak in support of Senate Bill 2242. My role with the Dakota Child Advocacy Center of Bismarck, is to provide consultation for children in the Bismarck region who are suspected of experiencing abuse which may include physical abuse and/or sexual abuse, and neglect. . I see children, 0-18 years of age, at the Advocacy Center.

As you are aware, the children with whom participate in the services at Child advocacy Centers are children who have experienced unspeakable trauma and who have a long road ahead of them in

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terms of long-term effects. This includes PTSD, depression, anxiety, developmental delays, and physical illnesses. These children require complicated coordination of care that requires multiple agencies to be involved. The child advocacy center is the single agency with who coordinates these services. That is the role of the Children's Advocacy Centers. Without these centers the care would be fragmented, and incomplete. That approach the Child Advocacy Centers provide give the children the opportunity to receive care, not only to physically heal, which is my role, but to heal emotionally along with their families.

With the Children's Advocacy Centers coordination, the care also becomes focused on how to help both the child and family and to assist them with learning how to become a healthy family unit.

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By supporting the work the Children's Advocacy Centers provide, we will continue to see a higher quality of care and healthier long term outcomes for the victims of abuse and neglect.

I urge a do pass on SB 2242.



Tisha Scheuer, MSN, APRN, SANE-A, FNP-C



Senate Appropriations Committee

Testimony In Support of Senate Bill #2242

1-28-19

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Hasan Buker. I am an Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at Minot State University. I hold a PhD in Criminal Justice from Washington State University. In the past 10 years, I carried out various research, consultancy, and training projects in regard to crimes against children, some of which were supported by UNICEF. I also have been teaching a course on this topic at MSU. Between 2016 and 2017, I conducted a research on the functions and needs of the Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) in North Dakota, with an intramural grant by MSU.

During that research, I collected qualitative data through participant observations at CACs in Fargo, Bismarck, Minot, and Grand Forks, as well as semi-structured interviews with the staff members working thereof and multi-disciplinary team members working closely with CACs' staff. I also followed up with some of these professionals after my on-site visits. In total, I interviewed 25 professionals who had considerable experience (at least 5 years) in working at or with CACs at different capacities. Based on the findings from that research and my decade-long academic experience working on the subject matter, I would like to share my following views and express my support for this Bill:

- Since the establishment of first CAC in ND, these non-profit organizations have been playing a significant role during the investigation of child abuse cases by conducting evidence-based forensic interviews with the victims, as well as providing some medical services and treatment programs at some locations. Every year, the number of children served by CACs have been considerably increasing, as presented by Ms. Condol.
- These services, first of all, include an opportunity for victim children to talk with a specially-trained professional (forensic interviewer), for whom the victim child's interest and wellbeing is prioritized before anything else. On the other hand, we know that other professionals in the criminal justice system might not have the same level of experience, knowledge, and skills to talk with a victimized child on such a traumatic experience without causing secondary trauma.
- Indeed, the scientific studies in this regard have consistently indicated that an important reason for many child abuse victims not to report their victimization is the possible adversities they can face during the Criminal Justice procedures. Therefore, increasing the capacities of CACs will not only prevent causing secondary trauma for the victimized children, but will also increase public trust on the CJ system and its actors, which, in turn, will increase the likelihood of victims' reporting their victimization and effectively collaborating with the CJ professionals.
- Statements and effective collaboration of a victim are essential for a successful prosecution and adjudication in child abuse cases. Unreported cases or lack of sufficient proof for abuse cases leave the victims and all society vulnerable. Empowering CACs, on

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the other hand, will eventually help to decrease that vulnerability for the children of ND in the long run.

- Throughout my research, I observed that the CACs were acting as the agent of most needed attitudinal change among the professionals. Through the multi-disciplinary team meetings and more structured training programs, CACs educated many professionals on the phenomena of child abuse. With sufficient support from you and public alike, these non-profit organizations can well be a focal point of "advocacy" for the protection and well-being of children in the great state of ND.
- I also found out that CACs set an example for an effective interdisciplinary team approach in criminal investigations. Lack of coordination and cooperation across the CJ organizations can lead to flaws and inefficiencies during criminal investigations. More importantly, the success in this multi-disciplinary team approach was the result of effective leadership provided by CACs. An increased funding for CACs will help to retain the experienced professionals and administrators at CACs who will maintain and improve the leadership capacity of these intuitions.
- My research also indicated that CACs were taking the initiative to raise funds for their services. These initiatives, from a broader perspective, meant more than creating additional resources. Throughout these fund-raising activities, CACs mobilized many local residents and businesses to step up and help the victims. Thanks to those activities, many people learned about the fact that child abuse was a reality of their communities. Increasing the public funds for CACs can help them utilize that experience in planning and carrying out awareness raising activities for the local communities at a larger scale.
- Throughout my research, I observed that the professionals of the CACs of ND were passionately working to help victimized children and their families above and beyond their daily shifts. They did not limit their help with certain geographical boundaries, legal jurisdictions, socio-economic statuses of the victims, or their insurance. The most important limitation they faced, however, was the lack of sufficient funds to help all children who were victimized in different ways. Due to the lack of sufficient funding, some of these CACs were backlogged and there was a waiting period for the local law enforcement agencies to bring a victim child for forensic interview. Due to the time constraints and long distances, some local law enforcement agencies preferred to conduct their own interviews with victims. This, eventually, prevented these children from benefitting from various services provided by CACs. Increasing public funding will help hire more professionals, offer a verity of services, and deliver these services in a timely manner to the victims and their families.
- In conclusion, I am in full support of this Bill and I believe that increasing funds for CACs will certainly change many children's and their families' life.

Thank you.

Dr. Hasan Buker

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Senate Appropriations Committee
Testimony In Support of Senate Bill 2242
January 28, 2019

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee.

My name is Anna Frissell. I am the director of the Red River Children's Advocacy Center (RRCAC), with offices in Fargo and Grand Forks. We serve children who are alleged to be the victims of sexual and physical abuse, neglect and exploitation and their families from up and down the Red River Valley. I am testifying today in support of Senate Bill 2242.

Although Children's Advocacy Center's play an important role in our criminal justice, mental health and medical systems, they are not moneymakers. Currently the North Dakota Centers cobble together the needed funding in large part from state and federal monies, foundations, grants, fundraisers and donations.

In 2007, the North Dakota Legislature provided the initial appropriation for the work of the Children's Advocacy Centers. At that time, the RRCAC provided services to 356 children, offering 763 services to these children and their families. In 2018, we served 644 children and offered nearly 7,000 services to these children and their families. As Paula's testimony demonstrated, all the North Dakota Children's Advocacy Centers have seen this kind of growth in the need for their services. We are glad to see more children and families referred to the RRCAC (to all the CACs) and we want to have top notch services to offer them.

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We continue to reach out to individuals and the private sector for support, and we have managed to sustain our Centers to meet the growth we have experienced, as well as to enhance our services, all dedicated to the public safety of our state's most vulnerable citizens.

The additional \$100,000 appropriation per year, for each Center over the next biennium will allow us to continue to reach out to our rural counties: to ensure all cases that should be seen at a CAC have that opportunity and not just the most severe cases. Furthermore, this funding will assist our Centers to provide prevention education and resources to families in all our counties, mental health and advocacy services (i.e. counseling and reimbursement for family's travel to the center), training for professionals, forensic interviewing services, case management and case review.

We are proud partners of child protection workers, advocacy professionals, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and mental health and medical personnel of our state, counties and local communities. We greatly appreciate the support and confidence the Legislature has in the services we provide. If we receive this increase we will continue to provide the best services we can to all of the children and families in North Dakota who need us.

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank You.

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**SENATE BILL 2242 TESTIMONY
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS
January 28, 2019
HARVEST ROOM**

By Jonathan Byers, Assistant Attorney General

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jonathan Byers and I appear on behalf of the Attorney General. I wish to offer the Attorney General's support for the concept of legislative recognition and support for children's advocacy centers.

We live and work in a climate of heightened awareness and public scrutiny of the way that the criminal justice system handles sex offenders. As legislators you have seen, and will continue to see, various bills relating to sexual offender sentencing, supervision, registration, and civil commitment.

All of those measures depend on the successful detection, investigation, and apprehension of the perpetrators of sexual crimes in North Dakota. My success as a sexual abuse prosecutor hinges on the quality investigation of such crimes.

Professionals around the nation have developed a better way of responding to allegations of sexual abuse. Through the use of children's advocacy centers, children are interviewed by trained forensic professionals and are examined by physicians with the expertise to recognize signs of physical and sexual abuse. All of this occurs in a child and family-friendly environment that better serves the immediate and long-term needs of an abused child.

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Occasionally, through circumstance or lack of awareness, I see encounter an investigation done the old way—a frightened child interviewed by a police officer wearing a badge and a gun, or an exam conducted by an emergency room doctor who wants to stay out of court at all costs. The fulfillment of these important responsibilities by specially trained professionals should not be left solely to the chance of a well-written grant application.

As Legislators, you'll again have tough decisions to make about where tax dollars are best allocated. It is my heartfelt belief that every dollar that goes to a North Dakota Children's Advocacy Center is a dollar well spent. I would be happy to answer any questions.