

House Human Services Committee

March 3, 2021

Chairman Weisz and other members of the Committee. My name is Nan Kennelly. I am a Speech-Language Pathologist and Certified Brain injury Specialist from Fargo, and a provider for cognitive and communication disorders related to brain injury. I currently serve as the Chair of the North Dakota Brain Injury Advisory Council, a statutory-defined (NDCC 50-06.4-10) and Governor-appointed state advisory council. The Mission of the North Dakota Brain Injury Advisory Council is to improve the quality of life for all individuals with brain injury and their families through brain injury identification, awareness, prevention, research, education, collaboration, support services and advocacy.

My testimony today is in support of Senate Bill 2039 which offers clarification of membership for the Brain Injury Advisory Council. Currently, membership of the Council is limited to only one survivor and only one family member. The proposed language in SB 2039 would allow for the option of increasing the representation of survivor and family members and provide more flexibility in filling member slots. This clarification will be in alignment with North Dakota's commitment to person-centered principals and consumer leadership in the development and direction of brain injury services for North Dakota. Thank you for your time and I welcome any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Kennelly
Chair, ND Brain Injury Advisory Council