

Testimony
House Bill 1406 - Department of Human Services
House Transportation Committee
Representative Dan Ruby, Chairman

January 29, 2021

Chairman Ruby and members of the Transportation Committee, I am Jim Fleming, Director of the Child Support Division of the Department of Human Services (Department). Due to the impact House Bill 1406 would have on the state's Child Support and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs, I ask for a "do not pass" recommendation on House Bill 1406.

Knowing a parent's social security number is very important to locating a parent who owes child support and his or her assets, and in taking child support enforcement actions without risk of mistaken identity. In recognition of this, as a condition of participating in the Child Support and TANF programs, federal law since 1996 has required states to have a number of laws to ensure effectiveness of the Child Support program, including use of a parent's social security number:

In order to satisfy section 654(20)(A) of this title, each State must have in effect laws requiring the use of the following procedures, consistent with this section and with regulations of the Secretary, to increase the effectiveness of the program which the State administers under this part: ...

(13) Recording of social security numbers in certain family matters

Procedures requiring that the social security number of--

- (A)** any applicant for a professional license, driver's license, occupational license, recreational license, or marriage license be recorded on the application;
- (B)** any individual who is subject to a divorce decree, support order, or paternity determination or acknowledgment be placed in the records relating to the matter; and

- (C) any individual who has died be placed in the records relating to the death and be recorded on the death certificate.

42 United States Code Section 666.

The fiscal note on this Bill reflects the very real impact this Bill would have on the services the State offers to low-income families. If this Bill is passed, the federal government will disallow North Dakota's state child support plan, rendering North Dakota ineligible for federal funds. Because having an approved child support plan is a condition of receiving TANF block grant funds, TANF funds are also at risk.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, many of us instinctively resist being told what to do by the federal government. But in this case, the State has a long history of carefully safeguarding social security numbers and using them carefully to help support North Dakota's families. We would ask for a "Do Not Pass" recommendation on House Bill 1406. This concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.