



Testimony in Support of HB 1540

Senate Appropriations Committee

Chairman Bekkedahl and Members of the Committee, my name is Mike Krumwiede appearing on behalf of the American Heart Association in support of House Bill 1540. AHA is a nonpartisan, not for profit organization with more than 800 North Dakotan AHA volunteers who advocate for longer and healthier lives. AHA's mission is to reduce death and disability from heart disease and stroke.

The American Heart Association supports investing in early childcare and education, Head Start and Early Head Start to create new opportunities and improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, children and their families.

- Establish funding for dedicated technical assistance and grant opportunities for early childcare and education programs operating in or serving low-income communities to adopt and implement nutrition, active play, and screen time standards.
- Secure funding for targeted outreach, recruitment, and retention of licensed ECE programs and pre-licensure technical assistance. Prioritize funding to build supply in rural areas, child-care deserts, areas with a high proportion of exempt providers, and family childcare homes.
- Support other Head Start and Early Head Start needs that will increase the number of eligible children served, such as infrastructure, transportation, or the duration of services by seeking state supplemental funding.

We are happy that the with the legislature for investing in childcare and making this change a standard policy we fully support HB 1540 and would encourage a DO PASS recommendation. Thank you.