

**Senate Workforce Development Committee**  
**Hearing on SB 2301: Child Care Workforce Stabilization Program**  
**January 26, 2023**

Chairman Wobbema, members of the committee, my name is **Mark Pierce**. I live in **Beulah, ND**. I am a board member of Energy Capital Cooperative Child Care in Hazen. I'm also the founder of Faces of North Dakota Coal which is a grassroots organization advocating for the people, families, and communities of Coal Country. I work in procurement at North American Coal's Freedom Mine.

I'm **in favor** of Senate Bill 2301. I firmly believe that quality, affordable child care is the key to North Dakota's continued prosperity building upon the reversal of the population outmigration of the 1980's and 1990's. Having worked in the energy industry, I understand that safe, reliable, affordable energy is the fuel that feeds all other industries. Child care is very similar to energy in that aspect. Quality, affordable child care is the facilitator that allows our workforce to deliver that energy. It is an investment in the human capital that today's business requires.

The child care stabilization program is an innovative solution that will address many challenges our child care system in North Dakota encounters. I encourage a "**Do-Pass**" recommendation. Thank you for your consideration.