



**CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY
CENTERS**
OF NORTH DAKOTA

House Judiciary Committee
Testimony In Support of House Bill #1047
1-8-24

Chairman Klemin and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Greg Kasowski, Director of the Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota. I am here in support of House Bill 1047.

Each year across North Dakota, more than 3,000 victims of child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, and other forms of child maltreatment receive services from a Children's Advocacy Center.

Every single day at Children's Advocacy Centers, we witness firsthand the devastating impacts that these cases have on so many individuals—first and foremost the child victims and their families. Secondly, these cases take an emotional toll on our staff and partners involved in the case—law enforcement, human services, medical, mental health, and victim advocates.

This secondary traumatic stress or vicarious trauma may even be experienced by those involved in the justice process—attorneys, judges, advocates—and community members who serve on a jury may certainly be affected as well.

House Bill 1047 is a compassionate answer to help jurors who hear graphic descriptions in child abuse cases. Anecdotally, it could potentially:

- Increase the willingness of jurors to serve, reducing jury pool exclusions
- Help jurors better focus on the facts of the case, leading to more informed and just verdicts

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you the opportunity to testify today, and I am happy to try and answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Greg Kasowski
Executive Director

Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota

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