



NDSBA
NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION

1224 West Owens Avenue
Bismarck ND 58501
1-800-932-8791 • (701)255-4127
www.ndsba.org

HB 1095
Testimony of Amy De Kok
Senate Human Services Committee
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Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Amy De Kok, and I am the Executive Director for the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA). NDSBA represents all 168 public school districts and their governing boards. I am here today to express our support for HB 1095. HB 1095 represents a step toward strengthening the partnership between schools and Child Protective Services (CPS) in addressing cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. By allowing the establishment of a designated CPS liaison within school districts, this legislation can enhance communication, coordination, and the overall ability of educators and social services professionals to support vulnerable students.

Educators are often the first to recognize signs of abuse or neglect. However, due to legal complexities and administrative barriers, collaboration between schools and CPS has not always been as efficient as it should be. HB 1095 will encourage school districts to designate point of contact who can:

- Facilitate timely communication with CPS;
- Assist with investigations when legally permitted;
- Assist in the coordination of necessary resources for students in the care of CPS; and
- Provide critical support to school personnel in understanding and addressing the needs of affected students.

Another strength of this bill is its emphasis on training and accountability. The required training for CPS liaisons will ensure that these individuals understand child abuse reporting requirements, CPS procedures, and best practices for collaboration—all while maintaining confidentiality and ethical standards.

NDSBA appreciates the House Education Committee's adoption of several amendments that make this bill more practical and workable for school districts. These amendments clarify responsibilities, ensure feasible implementation, and provide flexibility for districts in designating a liaison.

HB 1095 is a commonsense measure that will improve outcomes for children while ensuring that schools and CPS can work together more effectively. We urge the committee to give this bill a favorable recommendation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.