

The Council

Human Services Committee

The Human Services Committee met on November 19. This was the second meeting of the committee. The committee is studying homelessness in the state, state and local services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have hearing differences, and child care provider licensing. The committee also is working to conduct a program evaluation of the Department of Health and Human Services child care services.

The committee received testimony from several individuals regarding homelessness and services available to assist people experiencing homelessness. The North Dakota Housing Finance Agency testified on their programs and the newly created Interagency Council on Homelessness established by Governor Armstrong with Executive Order 2025-08. The committee also heard testimony from the Continuum of Care, Department of Commerce, North Dakota Coalition for Homeless People, Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health, Native Inc., Grand Forks Housing Authority, and the Bismarck Police Department regarding homelessness.

Presentations from North Dakota Hands and Voices and the Department of Public Instruction provided information on services for the deaf and hard of hearing. The committee approved a motion to have the Chairman request from the Legislative Management Chairman permission to expand the study to include vision services in addition to hearing services.

The Department of Health and Human Services provided an update on the Child Care Services Advisory Committee that is reviewing child care provider licensing laws and policies. The committee adopted the proposed objectives and scope of the program evaluation of the Department of Health and Human Services child care services.

Upcoming Meetings

December

- 2** Information Technology
- 3** Administrative Rules
Legislative Task Force on
Government Efficiency
Tax Reform and Relief Advisory
- 4** Rural Health Transformation
- 9** Water Topics Overview
Legislative Audit and
Fiscal Review
- 10** Budget Section
(including divisions)
- 11** Child Custody Review Task Force
Government Finance
(including subcommittees)
- 15** Advanced Nuclear Energy
- 16** Protection and Victim Services
- 17** Emergency Response Services
- 18** Judiciary

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Health Care Committee

The Health Care Committee held its second meeting on November 18. As part of the committee's study on unmet dental and oral health care needs of low-income children, Native American children, and individuals with disabilities, the committee received testimony from representatives from the North Dakota Department of Health, Bismarck State College, Mystic Smiles Dental Clinic, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Bismarck, the Indian Affairs Commission, the North Dakota Dental Association, Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas, Family HealthCare, the North Dakota State Board of Dental Examiners, the Insurance and Securities Department, Bridging the Dental Gap, and Northland Health Center. Testimony highlighted workforce challenges, including the critical role of recruitment programs and new programs at Bismarck State College and Dakota College at Bottineau for training dental staff. Testimony also addressed rural access challenges for patients and providers and the work being done to meet the needs of underserved populations.

The committee heard testimony from Essentia Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota, the Information Technology Department, and the North Dakota Hospital Association relating to its study of the ability for health care systems and providers to submit prior authorization reviews by secure electronic means.



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