

2025 HOUSE JUDICIARY

HCR 3028

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HCR 3028
2/17/2025

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to consider studying human trafficking victim service and reentry programs.

9:31 a.m. Chairman Klemin opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Klemin, Vice-Chairman Karls, Vice-Chairman Vetter, Representatives Christianson, Henderson, Johnston, S. Olson, Satrom, Tveit, VanWinkle, Wolff, Schneider

Members Absent: Representatives McLeod, Hoverson

Discussion Topics:

- Previous North Dakota human trafficking studies
- Current North Dakota foundations related to human trafficking survivors

9:31 a.m. Representative Steve Vetter, North Dakota Representative for District 18, introduced the bill and provided testimony #37850.

9:37 a.m. Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst at North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action, testified in favor and provided testimony #37835.

9:39 a.m. David Tamisiea, Executive Director of North Dakota Catholic Conference, testified in favor and provided testimony #37776.

9:42 a.m. Stacy Schaffer, Executive Director of 31:8 Project, testified in favor and provided testimony #37853.

9:49 a.m. Leah Issac, Human Trafficking Survivor, testified in favor and provided testimony #37794.

Additional written testimony:

Amy Boyd, Anti-Trafficking Program Manager for Youthworks, submitted neutral testimony #37834.

10:12 a.m. Chairman Klemin closed the hearing.

Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk



*Representing the Diocese of Fargo
and the Diocese of Bismarck*

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To: House Judiciary Committee
From: David Tamisiea, Executive Director
Date: February 17, 2025
Re: HCR 3028 — Human Trafficking Study

The North Dakota Catholic Conference strongly supports common-sense legislation to fight against the scourge of human trafficking and the closely related crimes of prostitution and commercial exploitation of children. These intersecting crimes violate the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of human life, and fundamental rights of the human person.

All three of the last popes (John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have publicly decried human trafficking and called for its eradication and for the protection of its victims. Our two North Dakotan bishops, Bishop David and Bishop John Folda, have also asked that addressing the problem of human trafficking be made a legislative priority.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked for labor or commercial sex acts worldwide – including right here in North Dakota. It can happen in any community, and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Human trafficking often is hidden and goes unidentified. It is a crime that flourishes in darkness.

Over the past year, service providers, department officials, and other stakeholders have shared with the North Dakota Catholic Conference some of the challenges in fighting human trafficking. These challenges include a lack of clarity in defining human trafficking, insufficient data on trafficking in our state, disagreements over the appropriate length of stay for trafficked youth in residential treatment facilities, and a pressing need for clear standards for identifying and preventing human trafficking. HCR 3028 aims to address these issues by directing Legislative Management to conduct a study to assess human trafficking victim service and reentry programs.

We respectfully ask for a **Do Pass** recommendation on House Concurrent Resolution 3028.

I am grateful to be speaking with you today. I had every intention of being there in person, hotel booked and car packed, unfortunately, fear and anxiety took hold an hour before I was to leave. The concern of retaliation if I expose myself publicly was debilitating. Safety and Anonymity is something that has been elusive for the past five years. Isolation at times is my only sense of security. This is and remains a massive obstacle and concern for survivors and this is why you will rarely see us speak publicly, if at all. There is nothing legally implemented at this time to keep survivors and whistleblowers protected. This issue among many other issues is what compels me to speak with you today. The desire to highlight these issues has been driving me forward even amidst my fears.

This present moment used to be unimaginable. My story as a mother and a survivor of human trafficking and systemic abuse began two years before I was brought to ND. This is my Testimony, a testimony that I feel will do better being heard here, than in any courtroom. A little over five years ago I was busy being a single mom, raising my two daughters and managing a hair salon—a life that was quite ordinary.

Living paycheck check to paycheck like many, doing my best to be and do it all as a mother, life wasn't perfect but always centered in love. I, myself, grew up in a small MN town, an uneventful but safe and quiet community. My background includes jail administration, early childhood development, transportation, beautician, management and floral design. My most favorite of these things, is being a mom. The events that I am about to relay to you changed mine and my daughters

lives five years ago, it began with a predatory landlord. I didn't see the red flags, due to societal norms and never wanting to offend or hurt others feelings, these red flags were blurred. I thought everyone that smiled at me was a kind and good person. I grew up learning to trust everyone

until they prove themselves otherwise. I was no longer in that world. I was not taught that predators will look just like you and me. I thought predators were obvious. That's what all the books and stories said. These predators take advantage of knowing this and using these societal norms and ignorance against their victims. I endured my landlords' advances, making polite excuses until I finally stood up for myself and said no. Everything changed dramatically from that point forward. He levied an eviction against me with false accusations, I fought the whole way to court with proof of the lies.

The judge never looked at my documentation, my daughters and I were evicted. I sought legal aid and was denied help each time. It all happened in weeks, not months like they say, thinking you'll have time. This opened the door for another predator to enter my life, a predator that my landlord was connected to within the same human trafficking network. If one can't get to you they will send another one to try. Amidst this chaos unfolding this predator came in the form of a boyfriend, the hero, love bombing me and my life, offering shelter.

This was no hero; this was just the beginning of events that would unfold in my life like a Hollywood movie. Little did I know this man was tasked to groom me, methodically and secretly drugging me, evaluating me and gathering information on me, for a much darker and deeper network. Using psychological warfare to instill in me "trigger" words to illicit a desired response in the victim, this can be a verbal cue, or a symbol. Always watching me through cameras, neighbors, and others in the network, I was kept on a tight leash. My world growing ever smaller, stranger and scarier.

I began noticing small things, I slowly and methodically began uncovering and documenting what had been happening and being done to me. When I escaped my groomer I was still ignorant, I had escaped him but I had not escaped the network. What I can only describe as the car ride from hell.

the day I fled with my daughters. Knowing I had a very narrow window to do so. This event Engrained in our memories like a nightmare. My story is a well-documented one, showing a timeline of events documented by the human trafficking network hotline, FBI, numerous law enforcement agencies, several shelters, Advocates, hospitals, various state funded entities and therapists. Spanning WI, MN, ND and CO. Some of these professionals being eyewitness to nefarious and perplexing events surrounding me firsthand. Having accumulated knowledge and documentation as proof of what was happening to me and others, and how it was being done, was both revealing and distressing. As I uncovered more and more during my journey to find help, I found myself in an increasingly vulnerable state.

After sending my daughters to safety. I was initiated into a two-year journey of homelessness, where staying alive was a daily activity by outrunning and outsmarting the network. I continually reached out for help, contacting over 600 foundations, law enforcement agencies, various entities tasked with DV and HT services, overturning any stone I found, yet I was mostly left to fend for myself. I was relentlessly pursued for over a year with threat of felony charges for fleeing with my daughters in my groomer's extra car, the same car I turned over to police the same day we fled, the county I fled filing charges of theft while the car was already in police custody. A car he bought for \$250.00 for me to

use when my only car mysteriously disappeared from my driveway shortly before I was evicted. Being shuffled around city to city, on foot, by buses, train, planes and strangers' cars around from state to state like an orphan that no one wanted to deal with. Being illegally held in psychiatric holds after calling 911 for help, not because I was threatening to harm myself or others, but because I was speaking of things that were not to be spoken of. Sedating me even though I was calm, restraining my wrists and ankles. Waking two days later, dazed and confused, papers being

shoved in my face to sign, my clothes handed to me in a rush, they couldn't get me out the front door fast enough, out to the street with no guidance or information for help. No empathy, no compassion. Hungry and afraid. My mind and heart screaming from the inside, I am someone's daughter, someone's mother, am I not worthy? Back on the street to play the game of survival again. Endless days of walking, go here, go there, maybe the next place can help, the next one, the next one. Could sure use a cup of hot coffee, walking, walking, walking. Need food, I'm being followed, I'm tired, I'm hungry, I miss my babies, I'm cold. These thoughts echoing daily in my head. How can I be among thousands of people every day and no one sees me? I need help, someone please help. Applying and reapplying for services, a maddeningly repetitive process that makes you question reality. Every new place has more of the same paperwork, more telling of my story, more let downs. Feeling as if it was ground hogs day every day. Chasing my tail, round and round the system i go. Many shelters I wouldn't have left my dog at, unsafe, drugs and traffickers operating openly as if they ran the shelters themselves. Some were a bit safer and slightly better the further away from the larger cities which is to be expected but this was where I saw and experienced more subtle and quiet abuses from within some of these shelters and systems and people that worked at them, it was harder to detect but nonetheless an effective form of abuse. Seeing and experiencing coercion through various tactics, misuse of power, authority, funds and donations, also withholding services and basic human needs. shelter exploiting survivors in various ways. Feeding women and children food that had been expired for two years, I was kicked out of a shelter for raising concerns about these issues to staff. Some just blatant lack of concern and unwillingness to help. Some advocates seemingly there only in case 911 needed calling and to collect a paycheck. I watched a

disabled diabetic elder woman go unchecked for almost 24 hours. In her bed unconscious, I called 911. I did find some that really did care, quietly, never openly, I also saw the underbelly of this world. In one shelter I was attacked, laying on the cement patio of the shelter with a head wound, blood coming from the gash on my head from when my skull met the pavement. Taken by ambulance to the emergency room barely conscious, staples to stitch me up. When asked by the doctor what happened, I said it was because I have low blood pressure and passed out. He knew I was lying, I feared retaliation. I made it back to the shelter, in a haze with a possible concussion, I stuffed a few things in a bag and left. Not one person from the shelter that I had spent the last four months called me to see what happened, take a report or see if I was okay. Open and vulnerable again, back to the streets. Some shelters felt like trap houses themselves, housing vulnerable women with men with only a flimsy door between you and them, these men openly making comments and advances, women they know are broken and afraid to say no. Back to the street. At the overnight shelters, I've seen Grown men wandering into the women's area while we were sleeping, the man, in only a shirt and underwear. The guard stationed at the women's door completely unconcerned while he flirts with homeless women. More predators. Back to the street. Staying sporadically in hotels, hotels some shelters would acquire for me when I was awaiting transport to their shelter, rarely vetting the accommodations, leaving myself and many others, some with children in hotels known for drugs and trafficking. The transportation process is incredibly unsafe and chaotic, many never make their destination due to being unaccompanied and out in the open when they are vulnerable to predators. Sitting for hours or even days at train and bus stations waiting to be shipped off. No money, no food, hoping to make it a little longer until you get to the next place to eat and sleep. Begging God that this next shelter, please, let this shelter be the one where I finally get help. I can tell my story, like many survivors,

most often on auto-pilot due to having to recount it with every new person and service I encountered, quite literally thousands of times. every new county, every new city, every new worker, more of the same. Some pushing me straight to finding employment, thinking to myself, 'are you hearing me? I'm running from traffickers, I am a woman whose life just blew up.' No one was really listening, just follow what they were programmed to do. I didn't need more administering to, regurgitating the same procedures from the same book, I needed someone to listen to me outside the box of the system. I needed someone to say, you're safe and if we don't have all the answers, we will help you through it. Names and faces were the only difference in every new town. What I am sharing with you all now, are parts of my story rarely heard. It was two years of feeling like a rabbit chasing a carrot on a stick. I became malnourished, These kinds of places and entities prey on the vulnerable and put a strain on communities, creating damaging affects to people already broken and keep funding away from reputable ones. I was lured like many, to different counties, even other states with the promise of help, only to realize it was another lie and dead end. I wasn't hiding, I hadn't given up, I was fighting every day for help. During these two years before arriving in ND, I saw and endured heinous acts committed against myself and others. Even amidst the horrors, I knew, I was lucky compared to what others have endured and still do—crimes committed by predators from every walk of life and even from the systems that were allegedly designed to help and protect. crimes being committed against vulnerable people. There are supposed laws against that.

Being thrust into a world filled with injustices, addictions, and suffering—a reality that felt like a foreign language. It was complex and overwhelming, rife with inequities that even seasoned professionals struggle to navigate. I was seen as valuable to this predatory network due to my

vulnerabilities: little to no family support, no previous criminal or mental health history and a demeanor being kind, nice, and seemingly naive. I appeared programmable to them. They thought no one would notice much if I disappeared. A network of predators linked together to exploit others. When you become a target of this network, you're no longer just facing an individual but an entire system of organized entities. Swirling you around within their systems, illusion of being free from their grasp, placing people around you and in your life. Every time they attempted to silence my voice; I would speak louder. I was punished when I did, anytime I fought back, I was punished in some way, financially, psychologically, physically, even with threat to loved ones, their reach into your life is cruelly invasive and pervasive. These are only a small fraction of insights into this predatory world, a fraction of what I and many others have and continue to endure, finding it difficult at times myself, to comprehend the vastness and connectivity of this picture as a whole and I lived it. Limiting over reach of law impedes law enforcement in their fight against human trafficking, along with just the sheer complexities of these cases, they lack funding for manpower and other necessary tools to combat trafficking. Then you enter into a nightmare of jurisdictional maps with inconsistent laws across cities, counties, states and federal jurisdiction tying everyone's hands.

Scattered stories as survivors run from town to town, leaving law enforcement with more questions than answers on how to help.

Those two years of my life felt like a game of survival. It all changed in July of 2021 when I called a sheriff's department for help. It was my Hail Mary moment. I was broken and twisted, a shell of my former healthy, bright, and optimistic self. The echoes lingering of being ridiculed, mocked, and shamed. Labeling me as a liar, crazy, an unsuitable mother and an addict.

He asked me a few questions, made a call and within hours, I arrived safely in a ND shelter.

I weighed less than 100 pounds—terrified, lost, and alone after two years of seeking help with

little success. All I wanted was to stop running. Reunite with my daughters, find safe shelter, and access warm, healthy food and a chance to pick up the pieces of a shattered life. The shelter in ND helped me begin that process and did so for over 3 years. After losing everything, my family, friends, belongings and being on the run for two years, this shelter felt like it was the Light in the Dark.

This was when my real battle began, the battle to save myself, my family, my life, my soul.

This ND shelter and my community have helped me to achieve some of these goals.

After stabilizing my housing, I began unraveling a monumental and complex puzzle of trauma, at times the shelter and advocates learning alongside me. I began unwrapping and walking myself through a complex labyrinth of healing.

For instance, someone like myself, that is a citizen with only an expired DL and no other documents, due to state and federal laws made it an almost two-year ordeal to acquire proper ID and birth certificate. The hurdles of dealing with a lack of laws to help secure anonymity to keep survivors safe outside of shelter.

I consider myself one of the fortunate ones; I had a life before abuse that while not perfect, provided a solid foundation, which I believe helped in a quicker capacity in my healing. It also contributed to helping me navigate through a daunting world of corruption, systemic injustices, and human trafficking not only at the hands of my perpetrators but also from a system that is woefully inadequate to address such complex circumstances.

The future:

I do see changes being made—people from all walks of life coming together, connecting. This collaborative spirit is evident in our shared efforts to tackle the complex challenges we face. I believe ND has the potential to be a model for communities and states nationwide, showcasing innovative solutions to end poverty, addiction, homelessness, abuse and

human trafficking. It's crucial that we also educate and engage with our communities as a whole. Their involvement fosters a sense of unity and shared purpose within communities. It's essential to recognize that wraparound services are often necessary for many individuals. One person frequently requires a team to help rebuild their life. However, we still encounter gaps within these services. The issue isn't that people don't want to help; it's that many are unaware of the problems that exist. When others are enlightened about the many challenges we face, they are often motivated to take action. I encourage everyone to ask questions—this is how we effectively find understanding and develop solutions to the issues at hand. Additionally, there is an unbalanced power dynamic that exists in government services meant to help those in need. It's crucial that we address this imbalance and ensure that those who have lived these experiences have a voice at the table, helping shape our future. By documenting successes and challenges, this helps provide valuable insights and resources for others looking to replicate this model.

In addition, focusing on holistic support systems ensures that we are not just addressing immediate needs but also investing in long-term solutions. By prioritizing mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being, we empower individuals to break free from cycles, fostering resilience within our communities. Together, we can cultivate an ecosystem that nurtures growth, healing, and opportunity. As I share my story, I invite others to learn from my experiences, in hopes of sparking a nationwide movement toward sustainable change.

While my story reflects a more positive outcome, there are still many hurdles I have to overcome. Work must continue to end abuse and vulnerabilities by reworking outdated policies that impede progress. We must prioritize giving seats at the table to those with real lived experience.

It's essential that the voices of individuals who have faced the challenges we aim to address are included in the decision-making process. Decisions made in meetings about people like myself should genuinely reflect the experiences and needs of those affected. By involving survivors and individuals with lived experience, we ensure that policies and programs are not only relevant but also, effective.

Additionally, we must address the broader issues of financial stability, which remain a significant barrier for many. Jobs are often an unrealistic prospect for many emerging from domestic violence, human trafficking, addiction, and homelessness. Without access to comprehensive support services that ensure a solid foundation and time to heal—mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually—individuals are at risk of falling back into these destructive cycles.

To break this cycle, it's essential to address the fundamental vulnerabilities that many face.

Access to stable housing, reliable transportation, nutritious food, and basic human needs is critical.

Only by removing these barriers can individuals truly begin their healing journey. When people feel secure in their environment, they can focus on rebuilding their lives, pursuing education and job opportunities and ultimately contributing positively to the community. We need to stop putting the cart before the horse and meet people where they are at. There's no one size fits all when it comes to needs and healing.

Dreams and personal goals often feel elusive, and it's vital that we create pathways for those willing to invest in us—not just within the regular parameters of existing systems but by valuing our ideas and contributions. Many individuals like myself have innovative thoughts and strategies that could enhance many initiatives. By integrating these perspectives, we can foster a more inclusive and effective approach to creating real change.

Moreover, we must advocate for a more holistic approach to those seeking it, healing that encompasses spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical health. I chose the holistic path to my own care, often times difficult to obtain due to no systematic or financial support. These elements are intricately connected and play a vital role in recovery. When we address only one aspect of well-being, we risk leaving individuals with incomplete support. True healing occurs when we consider the whole person.

For many, spirituality provides a sense of purpose and connection that is essential for emotional resilience. Mental health services must be complemented by emotional support and spiritual guidance to create a safe environment for individuals to thrive. Similarly, physical health interventions, such as proper nutrition and exercise, are foundational for restoring overall well-being.

When those who have lived and navigated the complex issues of domestic violence, human trafficking, homelessness, and addiction are included in discussions, we can create solutions that resonate deeply with the needs of others. These tables need our voices—our insights, our stories, and our perspectives—because we understand the nuances of these challenges in a way that others cannot.

By fostering an inclusive environment that values experiences and advocates for holistic health approaches, we can drive meaningful change. Together, we can develop strategies that lead to real and lasting solutions.

Creating an environment where every voice matters, every story counts, and where the journey of recovery addresses the full spectrum of human experience.

Funding should be a priority for those with proven track records and innovative ideas, ensuring that we provide the necessary support to those in need effectively and sustainably. When resources are allocated to organizations and initiatives with demonstrated success, we can be confident that our investments are making a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and families.

Traditional approaches may not suffice in a rapidly changing landscape, and fresh perspectives can lead to groundbreaking solutions. By funding organizations that prioritize innovation, we can encourage the development of new strategies that tackle issues like domestic violence, human trafficking and systemic abuse more effectively. Investing in proven and innovative organizations, enhances the support available to those in need and fosters a culture of accountability and excellence. It creates a competitive environment where organizations strive to improve their services, ultimately benefiting individuals and communities as a whole.

In conclusion, these needs are crucial to recovery and reintegration into society. To elaborate on what is needed moving forward:

1. **Stabilized Housing:** Safe and stable housing options are foundational for survivors. They need a secure place to live where they can heal and feel protected from potential traffickers or danger.
2. **Food and Security:** Access to nutritious food and basic necessities is crucial for their physical well-being. Ensuring that survivors are not only fed but also feel secure in their environment is an essential aspect of recovery.
3. **Aftercare Needs:** Comprehensive aftercare services help survivors regain a sense of normalcy. This can include emotional support, case management, and assistance with rebuilding their lives.

4. **Financial Needs:** Survivors often lack financial independence due to the exploitation they endured. Access to financial resources, including assistance and other means of support, is vital for their empowerment.
5. **Protective Services:** Survivors may face threats from their traffickers or others. Protective services, such as relocation assistance or a change of identity , can be essential in keeping them safe.
6. **Streamlined Services:** Survivors often have to navigate a complex web of systems (healthcare, legal, social services, etc.). Streamlining these services and making them more accessible can ease their journey to recovery.
7. **Anonymity:** Many survivors fear retaliation from traffickers or others connected to their exploitation. Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality in services is necessary for their safety and peace of mind.
8. **Transportation Issues:** Access to transportation is often a barrier for survivors who may need it for appointments or other essential needs. Providing assistance with transportation can help overcome this challenge. Standing at a bus stop leaves a survivor open and vulnerable.
9. **Legal Issues:** Survivors often have legal issues, such as criminal charges related to their trafficking experience or child custody issues. Legal support is critical in helping them navigate these complexities.
10. **Legal Documents:** Many survivors may have had their personal documents confiscated or lost during trafficking. Assistance in obtaining and safeguarding legal documents is an essential step for regaining their identity and securing their future.
11. **Mental Health Care:** All of the above issues are directly linked to a survivor's Mental Health. Addressing the trauma caused by human trafficking is essential for long-term recovery. Access to mental health care, including therapy and counseling, helps survivors process their experiences and rebuild their mental well-being but without addressing and solving the above stated issues a survivor will generally continue to suffer with mental health issues.

I speak not only from personal experience but also from extensive research on effective solutions to these ongoing issues. Through continued conversations, collaboration, and informed action, we can provide survivors with the necessary tools and resources to rebuild their lives with dignity and security.

I invite all of you here today to reach out to me and engage in further dialogue, and help create real, sustainable change for those who have suffered unimaginable trauma. Together, we can ensure that no survivor is left behind, and that each has the opportunity to heal, regain independence, and thrive.

I would like to ask everyone listening to take a moment and imagine yourself in another's shoes and In that moment, I hope you see that life is often far more complex and vibrant than we imagine. The world truly comes alive when we embrace new perspectives. We discover truth standing in others shoes, and while it may not always be the truth we desire to confront, it remains essential. We need truth to rise to the surface, loud and unyielding, echoing the screams of voices silenced or stifled. The experiences—both good and bad—have not only challenged me but have also strengthened me. Each trial and tribulation has contributed to my growth, layer by layer, shaping me into the woman and mother I am today. It's through this journey that I've learned resilience, compassion, and the importance of understanding others and myself. While I still face challenges and obstacles that are daunting and in need of immediate resolution, my hope is that my words here today echo through the halls of the capitol and the hearts of those that can do something about it.

Feb 17, 2025

HCR 3028

North Dakota House Judiciary Committee

Testimony from Amy Boyd, Anti-Trafficking Program Manager, Youthworks

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Boyd-Bolme; I am the Anti-Trafficking Program Manager for Youthworks. I am submitting neutral testimony today for House Concurrent Resolution 3028. Youthworks is a 501(c)3 non-profit providing youth and family services throughout North Dakota since 1986. Offices are in Fargo, Minot, Grand Forks, and Bismarck with services extending to the surrounding counties. Youthworks' focus and expertise is working with homeless, runaway, trafficked and struggling teens as well as parents and young adults 24 years of age and under. Since 2015, Youthworks has been the recipient of state and federal funds to combat Human Trafficking in North Dakota. The federal dollars that Youthworks receives are from the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). In the last biennium, Youthworks' Anti-trafficking team served 147 youth (ages 12-24), provided 400 hours of clinical services, and responded to 1,800 hours of crisis intervention. Most of the youth served were survivors of other crime, with child sexual abuse, child abuse/neglect, and family violence being the most common. Of the youth victims served at Youthworks, 48 were also experiencing

homelessness. Youthworks provided these youth with additional housing support, including 3,196 nights of housing.

Youthworks is committed to working with trafficking survivors from the moment that they are identified, as they work to reclaim their lives and go through the legal process as their trafficker is prosecuted. Learning how to live independently after being trafficked is incredibly difficult and is one of the primary skills that Youthworks Anti-Trafficking Specialists assist with. This process is not linear and requires time and patience. It can take years for trafficking survivors to move forward.

In the event that this resolution results in a legislative study, Youthworks looks forward to assisting with providing expertise and data with the study members.



Testimony Supporting House Concurrent Resolution 3028

Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
February 17, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Klemin and honorable members of the House Judiciary Committee. My name is Jacob Thomsen, and I am a Policy Analyst with North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Concurrent Resolution 3028 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this resolution.

Our organization believes that every person has inherent worth, and dignity given from God. Human trafficking, in its various forms, steals that worth and dignity away from the people who are victims of it. A person becomes dehumanized and is turned into a product, rather than a soul with worth, capability, and potential. They deserve to be loved. That feeling of love gets ripped away when people are bought and sold like a commodity.

Human trafficking crimes are incredibly traumatic to the victims. Victims are severely affected by these crimes. An article in the American Psychological Association journal says, “[Human trafficking] can cause a loss of basic human rights, loss of one’s childhood, disruption in families, and severe mental health consequences, including anxiety disorders, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and substance abuse.”¹

We’ve heard tragic stories from groups that work with human trafficking victims. One example is from a woman who was trafficked and everywhere she went, even though her trafficker was in prison, she thought that every time a door opened, or someone walked into a room, the person walking in was going to be her trafficker. She lived in constant fear of that person coming back to get her.

Because of the severe psychological effects of human trafficking, there can be a great deal of trouble in trying to reintegrate victims into society. This resolution provides for a study to see how our state can best help the victims that we have to re-enter society safely. This is a portion of services to human trafficking victims that is incredibly important, and our state needs to be sure we can help these victims in every way possible. For these reasons, North Dakota Family

¹ Novotney, A. (2023, April 24). *Trafficking of women and girls*. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/women-girls/trafficking-women-girls#:~:text=The%20physical%20and%20mental%20health,emotional%20attachment%20to%20their%20abuser.>

Alliance Legislative Action requests that you vote “DO PASS” on this resolution. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I will stand for any questions.



North Dakota House of Representatives

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Representative Steve Vetter

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COMMITTEES:

Judiciary (Vice Chair)
Government and Veterans Affairs

Chairman Klemin and members of the Judiciary committee, my name is Steve Vetter from district 18.

This resolution is to propose a study on the subject of human trafficking. The study has a few objectives. One is to get up to date information to legislators about the efforts toward helping victims of human trafficking. There are several organizations that help with this issue and are doing great work.

For example: We have the North Human Trafficking Task Force. They are a team that responds to victims of sex and labor trafficking by providing comprehensive services, investigating traffickers and solicitors, and prosecuting offenders. The NDHTTF is the nexus for a network of law enforcement and service providers to work in tandem to build capacity and combat trafficking statewide.

There are other organizations that are doing great work in this area so they study aims get that information to legislators so they may become aware if there should be future legislation to help their efforts.

The 2nd objective of the study to concentrate on re-entry in the workforce for victims and protecting them from the bad guys. Other than passing laws to punish human traffickers, how can the state help the victims of this terrible crime. The main purpose of this study is to concentrate on what are the best ways the state can help getting victims re-entry to the workforce and how do we protect victims from bad guys who seek to try and bring the victims back into their former servitude.

Member of the committee, I have some ideas but don't have a bill draft. The purpose of the study is to get better bill draft ideas to help this issue along.

I would ask for a Do Pass recommendation. Thank you and I will stand for questions.

Stacy Schaffer ~ Executive Director, 31:8 Project
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31:8 Project is submitting this testimony as NEUTRAL to HCR 3028.

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stacy Schaffer, Executive Director of 31:8 Project, and I am providing NEUTRAL testimony to HCR 3028. Thank you for the opportunity to share information about 31:8 Project and the important work we are doing to combat human trafficking. I launched 31:8 Project in 2015 but have been working in the anti-human trafficking field since 2006. I have also been a member of the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force since its inception. **31:8 Project is a nonprofit organization located in Bismarck dedicated to raising awareness about human trafficking throughout North Dakota (ND).** Our organization is unique in that we focus solely on providing services to adult victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Our mission is carried out through three key initiatives:

- **Demand Reduction Program (ND Century Code 12.1-29-07):** A major challenge in addressing human trafficking in ND is the persistent demand for hiring others to engage in sexual activity. In an attempt to create long-term solutions to change the underlying systems that allow sex trafficking to occur, **the 2015 Legislative session voted in favor of creating the Demand Reduction Program (DRP), a comprehensive intermediate sentencing, diversion, and education option for offenders charged with or convicted of solicitation of sexual acts with individuals over 18 years of age. Managed by 31:8 Project, this is the only state program that focuses on reducing the demand for prostitution.** The DRP educates offenders on the risks and impacts of sex trafficking, providing tools to improve relationships that may have influenced their decisions. By fostering healthier relationships and communities in North Dakota, the program aims to reduce recidivism and increase awareness of trafficking's effects. **Since its inception, 33 offending participants (ages 20-67) have successfully completed the program.**
- **Providing Education:** In 2024, 31:8 Project delivered **166 trainings and presentations** (a 40% increase from 2023) to individuals of all ages, including school-based programs, law enforcement, healthcare, service providers and general public. This education includes human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and online safety. This year, we will host our *5th Annual Bakken Human Trafficking Summit* in Bismarck, with the goal of educating over 400 professionals and community members.
- **Survivor Mentorship Program:** This program, launched in 2021, supports adult survivors of human trafficking over the age of 18. During the first year of the program, 31:8 Project worked with 10 survivors of human trafficking. **In 2024, this number increased to 62 sex and labor trafficking survivors - 85% of these individuals were**

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HCR 3028
2/17/2025

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to consider studying human trafficking victim service and reentry programs.

3:54 p.m. Chairman Klemin opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Klemin, Vice-Chairman Karls, Vice-Chairman Vetter, Representatives Christianson, Henderson, Hoverson, Johnston, S. Olson, Satrom, Tveit, VanWinkle, Wolff, Schneider

Members Absent: Representative McLeod

Discussion Topics:

- Previous human trafficking studies
- Alternatives to legislative studies

3:55 p.m. Representative VanWinkle moved a Do Pass.

3:55 p.m. Representative Schneider seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	Y
Representative Karen Karls	Y
Representative Steve Vetter	Y
Representative Nels Christianson	Y
Representative Donna Henderson	Y
Representative Jeff Hoverson	Y
Representative Daniel Johnston	Y
Representative Carrie McLeod	A
Representative SuAnn Olson	N
Representative Bernie Satrom	Y
Representative Mary Schneider	Y
Representative Bill Tveit	Y
Representative Lori VanWinkle	Y
Representative Christina Wolff	N

4:06 p.m. Motion passed 11-2-1

4:07 p.m. Representative Satrom will carry the bill.

4:07 p.m. Chairman Klemin closed the hearing.

Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HCR 3028 ([25.3090.01000](#))

Judiciary Committee (Rep. Klemin, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3028 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2025 SENATE JUDICIARY

HCR 3028

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

HCR 3028
4/8/2025

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to consider studying human trafficking victim service and reentry programs.

8:59 a.m. Chair Larson opened the meeting.

Members present:

Chair Larson, Vice Chairman Paulson, Senators: Castaneda, Cory, Luick, Myrdal, Braunberger.

Discussion Topics:

- Workforce reentry programs
- Psychological effects of human trafficking
- Available support programs for trafficking survivors

9:00 a.m. Representative Vetter, District 18, introduced the bill and submitted testimony in favor #44765.

9:06 a.m. Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action, testified in favor and submitted testimony #44762.

9:08 a.m. David Tamisiea, Executive Director, North Dakota Catholic Conference, testified in favor and submitted testimony #44764.

9:13 a.m. Anna M. Frissell, Employee and Lobbyist, Youthworks, testified as neutral and submitted testimony #44705.

9:18 a.m. Chair Larson closed the hearing.

9:18 a.m. Senator Luick moved a Do Pass.

9:19 a.m. Senator Myrdal seconded the motion.

9:19 a.m. Committee discussed improved services for trafficking victims.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	Y
Senator Jose L. Castaneda	Y
Senator Claire Cory	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion Passed 7-0-0.

9:21 a.m. Senator Braunberger will carry the bill.

9:22 a.m. Committee discussion on upcoming schedule.

9:23 a.m. Chair Larson closed the hearing.

Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HCR 3028 ([25.3090.01000](#))

Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3028 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This resolution does not affect workforce development.

April 8, 2025
HCR 3028
North Dakota Senate Judiciary Committee
Testimony from Anna Frissell, Youthworks

Honorable Chairperson Larson and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

My name is Anna Frissell. I am submitting neutral testimony today for House Concurrent Resolution 3028.

I work for Youthworks. Youthworks is a 501(c)3 non-profit providing youth and family services throughout North Dakota since 1986. We have offices in Fargo, Minot, Grand Forks, and Bismarck, with services extending to the surrounding counties. Youthworks' focus and expertise is working with homeless, runaway, trafficked and struggling teens, as well as parents and young adults, 24 years of age and under.

Since 2015, Youthworks has been the recipient of state and federal funds to combat Human Trafficking in North Dakota. The federal dollars that Youthworks receives are from the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). In the last biennium, Youthworks' Anti-trafficking team served 147 youth (ages 12-24), provided 400 hours of clinical services, and responded to 1,800 hours of crisis intervention. Most of the youth served were survivors of other crime, with child sexual abuse, child abuse/neglect, and family violence being the most common. Of the youth victims served at Youthworks, 48 were also experiencing homelessness. Youthworks provided these youth with additional housing support, including 3,196 nights of housing.

Youthworks is committed to working with trafficking survivors from the moment that they are identified. We support them as they work to reclaim their lives and go through the prosecution of their trafficker.

Learning how to live independently after being trafficked is incredibly difficult and Youthworks Anti-Trafficking Specialists assist to help build the primary skills that we all take for granted. This process is not linear and requires time and patience. It can take years for trafficking survivors to move forward.

In the event this resolution results in a legislative study, Youthworks will assist the work of the study committee by providing expertise and data.



Testimony Supporting House Concurrent Resolution 3028

Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
April 8, 2025

Madam Chair Larson and honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Jacob Thomsen, and I am a Policy Analyst with North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Concurrent Resolution 3028 and respectfully request that you render a "DO PASS" on this resolution.

Our organization believes that every person has inherent worth, and dignity given from God. Human trafficking, in its various forms, steals that worth and dignity away from the people who are victims of it. A person becomes dehumanized and is turned into a product, rather than a soul with worth, capability, and potential. They deserve to be loved. That feeling of love gets ripped away when people are bought and sold like a commodity.

Human trafficking crimes are incredibly traumatic to their victims. Victims are severely affected by these crimes. An article in the American Psychological Association journal says, "[Human trafficking] can cause a loss of basic human rights, loss of one's childhood, disruption in families, and severe mental health consequences, including anxiety disorders, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and substance abuse."¹

We've heard tragic stories from groups that work with human trafficking victims. One example is from a woman who was trafficked and everywhere she went, even though her trafficker was in prison, she thought that every time a door opened, or someone walked into a room, the person walking in was going to be her trafficker. She lived in constant fear of that person coming back to get her.

Because of the severe psychological effects of human trafficking, there can be a great deal of trouble in trying to reintegrate victims into society. This resolution provides for a study to see how our state can best help the victims that we have to re-enter society safely. This is a portion of services to human trafficking victims that is incredibly important, and our state needs to be sure we can help these victims in every way possible. For these reasons, North Dakota Family

¹ Novotney, A. (2023, April 24). *Trafficking of women and girls*. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/women-girls/trafficking-women-girls#:~:text=The%20physical%20and%20mental%20health,emotional%20attachment%20to%20their%20abuser.>

Alliance Legislative Action requests that you vote “DO PASS” on this resolution. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I will stand for any questions.



*Representing the Diocese of Fargo
and the Diocese of Bismarck*

To: Senatue Judiciary Committee
From: David Tamisiea, Executive Director
Date: April 8, 2025
Re: HCR 3028 — Human Trafficking Study

The North Dakota Catholic Conference strongly supports common-sense legislation to fight against the scourge of human trafficking and the closely related crimes of prostitution and commercial exploitation of children. These intersecting crimes violate the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of human life, and fundamental rights of the human person.

All three of the last popes (John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have publicly decried human trafficking and called for its eradication and for the protection of its victims. Our two North Dakotan bishops, Bishop David and Bishop John Folda, have also asked that addressing the problem of human trafficking be made a legislative priority.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked for labor or commercial sex acts worldwide – including right here in North Dakota. It can happen in any community, and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Human trafficking often is hidden and goes unidentified. It is a crime that flourishes in darkness.

Over the past year, service providers, department officials, and other stakeholders have shared with the North Dakota Catholic Conference some of the challenges in fighting human trafficking. These challenges include a lack of clarity in defining human trafficking, insufficient data on trafficking in our state, disagreements over the appropriate length of stay for trafficked youth in residential treatment facilities, and a pressing need for clear standards for identifying and preventing human trafficking. HCR 3028 aims to address these issues by directing Legislative Management to conduct a study to assess human trafficking victim service and reentry programs.

We respectfully ask for a **Do Pass** recommendation on House Concurrent Resolution 3028.

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North Dakota House of Representatives

STATE CAPITOL
600 EAST BOULEVARD
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



Representative Steve Vetter

District 18
804 South 17th Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201-4241
smvetter@ndlegis.gov

COMMITTEES:

Judiciary (Vice Chair)
Government and Veterans Affairs

Chairman Larson and Senators of the Judiciary committee,

my name is Steve Vetter from district 18 which is Grand Forks along the Red River to Manvel.

This resolution is to propose a study on the subject of human trafficking. The study has a few objectives. The first objective is to get up to date information to legislators about the efforts toward helping victims of human trafficking. There are several organizations that help with this issue and are doing great work.

For example: We have the North Human Trafficking Task Force. They are a team that responds to victims of sex and labor trafficking by providing comprehensive services, investigating traffickers and solicitors, and prosecuting offenders. The NDHTTF is the nexus for a network of law enforcement and service providers to work in tandem to build capacity and combat trafficking statewide.

There are other organizations that are doing great work in this area so they study aims get that information to legislators so they may become aware if there should be future legislation to help their efforts.

The 2nd objective of the study to concentrate on re-entry in the workforce for victims. Other than passing laws to punish human traffickers, how can the state help the victims of this terrible crime? The main purpose of this study is to concentrate on what are the best ways the state can help getting victims re-entry to the workforce. Should there be a general education class to help them with the basic necessities of having a job and managing a household? What type of programs would work the best? Is there a pilot programs idea or state-wide initiative?

The 3rd Objective is how we protect victims from bad guys who seek to try and bring the victims back into their former servitude. Is there a buddy system of a program we could start? Ideas like using dogs for protection and companionship or retired police officers volunteering to look after a former victim.

I don't know the answers to the questions I pose so I believe a study is needed to:

1. Up to date current information to legislators
2. Study Re-entry to the job force
3. Study how to protect former victims

Member of the committee, I have some ideas but don't have a bill draft. The purpose of the study is to get better bill draft ideas to help this issue along.

I would ask for a Do Pass recommendation. Thank you and I will stand for questions.