

Fifty-fifth Legislative Assembly, State of North Dakota, begun in the Capitol in the City of Bismarck, on Monday, the sixth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4025
(Senators Nalewaja, Cook, C. Nelson, Robinson)
(Representatives Grande, Kliniske)

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Council to study the effects of sexual abuse on child victims, strategies to assist child victims and the parents of child victims, the use and effectiveness of the mandatory reporting law, effective deterrents, and the need for training of professionals, public awareness initiatives, and training of school personnel in the recognition of victims and in prevention activities.

WHEREAS, based upon a survey of parents, a December 1995 Gallup poll estimated that 23 percent of those parents as children were sexually abused by an adult or older child and that 1,300,000 children in the United States have been forced to touch an adult or older child in a sexual manner, have been forcibly touched by an adult or older child in a sexual manner, or have been forced to have sex with an adult or older child; and

WHEREAS, in this state in fiscal year 1995, 380 reports of suspected child sexual abuse by a caretaker were reported to the Department of Human Services, and in 122 of those reports a determination was made that there was probable cause to believe child sexual abuse was indicated, and an additional 234 reports of suspected noncaretaker child sexual abuse were made to the department and were referred to law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation manages over 300 adult sex offenders and research about adult sex offenders has revealed that more than one-half offended as children and that treatment can stop many of these offenders from reoffending; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota state law provides for mandatory reporting of suspected abuse; and

WHEREAS, parents of a sexually abused child may be emotionally traumatized by their child's victimization and may be in need of support including a parents' network; and

WHEREAS, sexually abused children may suffer from physical, mental, and emotional deterioration, low self-esteem, poor academic progress, inappropriate behaviors, and suicidal tendencies; and

WHEREAS, the child protection services program through the Alliance for Sexual Abuse Prevention and Treatment promotes public awareness of child abuse issues and the prevention of child sexual abuse, and also provides training for professionals; and

WHEREAS, the Child Fatality Review Panel monitors unexpected child deaths and recommends changes in policy, practices, and law to prevent child deaths; and

WHEREAS, evidence suggests that efforts to prevent abuse and to promptly and appropriately treat victims and offenders will save taxpayers millions of dollars over time and will save children from trauma and lifelong suffering;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

That the Legislative Council study the effects of sexual abuse on child victims, strategies to assist child victims and the parents of child victims, the use and effectiveness of the mandatory reporting law, effective deterrents, and the need for training of professionals, public awareness initiatives, and training of school personnel in the recognition of victims and in prevention activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislative Council report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the Fifty-sixth Legislative Assembly.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

Secretary of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 1997,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State