

*Senate Bill 2256*

*House Human Services*

*March 9, 2021*

*Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee,*

*I am Sammantha Peterson, a North Dakota parent of a child with cerebral palsy. I am giving testimony today, to ask you to recommend a do pass on Senate Bill 2256 with the amendments proposed today. My daughter is among many others in the state who has a significant physical disability and does not qualify for any of the existing waivers. My daughter is beautiful, sweet, and smart. She is also a wheelchair user and needs assistance with basic care. Without access to the Developmental Delay (DD) waiver, our family goes without much needed services. My daughter does not have an intellectual disability severe enough to qualify for the waiver based on its current verbiage. Yet she spends 4 or more hours in physical and occupational therapy each week. She sees a team of specialists too long to list. She has undergone complex surgeries that have hospitalized her for weeks at a time and intense rehab afterwards. For example, during her hip and foot surgery at the end of 2017, I spent 22 straight days in my home caring for her full time. Due to the casts on her legs and the weight of her body with the casts, we were unable to get her out of the home.*

*Like any other disability or chronic health condition, a child with cerebral palsy needs access to safe and reliable care. She needs expensive home modifications, assistive technology, vehicle modifications, and more. She could do so much more if she just had the accessibility to do so. This also hinders my own ability to have full time employment. As much as I love my daughter and will always take care of her, surviving on one income in our current economy is difficult. These children deserve not only a study, but a true evaluation and action. It is long overdue, and our families need your help.*

*Thank you so much for your time,*

*Sammantha Peterson*

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