

2023 HOUSE EDUCATION

HB 1144

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1144
1/18/2023

Relating to required training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect

9:00 AM

Chairman Heinert opened the hearing. Members present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck, Representatives Conmy, Dyk, Hager, Hauck, Heilman, Hoverson, Jonas, Longmuir, Marschall, Murphy, Novak, and Timmons.

Discussion Topics:

- Educator training
- Video training
- School administrator training

Representative Austin Schauer Bill Sponsor Support #14265
Christy Dodd, Executive Director Prevent Child Abuse ND Support #13909
Seth O'Neill CAWS North Dakota Support #13869
Mary Frances Keller Student/Mandated Reporter Support #14167
Hailey Boekelheide Support #14178
Gianna Andress Support #14035
Sarah Myers Support #13827
Amy Kempfer Support #14147
Aimee Copas Executive Director NDCEL Opposition #14140 #14141

Additional Written Testimony:

Kathy Busche # 14089,
Michelle Roeszler # 14085
Lindsey Burkhardt # 14064
Shanna Brady #13863
Sue Brady #13781
Megan Buske # 13652

Closed hearing 9:47 AM

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk
By Bev Monroe

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1144
1/25/2023

Relating to required training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect

9:00 AM Chairman Heinert opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Heinert, Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck, Representatives Conmy, Dyk, Hager, Hauck, Heilman, Hoverson, Jonas, Longmuir, Marschall, Murphy, Novak, and Timmons.

Discussion Topics:

- Continuing education
- CPS workers license renewal

Chairman Heinert, Amendment 23.0094.02000, Testimony 14140
Rep Timmons, Amendment 23.0094.02001, Testimony 19665

Rep Heilman moved to amend HB 1144, seconded by Rep Timmons. **Voice vote. Motion carried.**

Rep. Heilman moved to further amend HB 1144 to add a new section between lines 12 and 13 that says “the training must qualify for continuing education credit that counts toward license renewal”, seconded by Rep Novak. **Voice vote. Motion carried.**

Representative Timmons moved a Do Pass as Amended, seconded by Rep Jonas. **Motion withdrawn.**

Representative Novak moved Amendment 23.0094.02001, Testimony 19665, seconded by Rep Murphy. **Voice vote, motion carried.**

Representative Murphy moved a Do Pass as Amended on HB 1144, seconded by Rep Jonas.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	Y
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative Scott Dyk	N
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y
Representative Matt Heilman	N
Representative Jeff A. Hoverson	N
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	N

Representative Eric James Murphy	Y
Representative Anna S. Novak	Y
Representative Kelby Timmons	N

Motion carried 9-5-0. Representative Murphy is carrier.

9:47 AM Chairman Heinert closed the hearing.

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk

January 25, 2023

HA 1-25-23

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1144

Page 1, after line 7 insert "1."

Page 1, after line 11, insert:

"2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license renewal."

Page 1, after line 15 insert "1."

Page 1, after line 19, insert:

"2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license renewal."

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1144: Education Committee (Rep. Heinert, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (9 YEAS, 5 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1144 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, after line 7 insert "1."

Page 1, after line 11, insert:

"2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license renewal."

Page 1, after line 15 insert "1."

Page 1, after line 19, insert:

"2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license renewal."

Renumber accordingly

2023 SENATE EDUCATION

HB 1144

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1144
3/7/2023

Relating to required training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

2:30 PM Chair Elkin opened the hearing. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Sen Axtman, Sen Conley, Sen Lemm, and Sen Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Child protection
- Tracking by Dept Public Instruction
- Misdemeanor offense

Rep Austen Schauer, District 13, bill sponsor, testified in support #22753.

Christy Dodd, ND Prevent Child Abuse, testified in support #22238.

Seth O'Neill, CAWS ND, testified in support #22296.

Amy Kempfer, W Fargo, ND, testified via TEAMS in support #22641.

Kevin Hoherz, ND testified opposed with no written testimony.

Alexis Baxley, ND School Boards, testified opposed with no written testimony.

Bob Marthmaller, ND United testified neutral with no written testimony.

Joe Kolosky, Dept Public Instruction answered questions.

Additional written testimony:

Lindsey Burkhardt, ND Prevent Child Abuse, in support #22656.

Dr Aimee Copas, ND Council Educational Leaders, opposed #22500.

Sarah Myers, nurse, Colfax, ND, in support #21885.

3:15 PM Chair Elkin closed the hearing.

Pam Dever, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1144
3/8/2023

Relating to required training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

3:01 PM Chair Elkin opened committee work. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Sen Axtman, Sen Conley, Sen Lemm, and Sen Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Bill review
- Training requirements

Sen Beard discussed online training.

3:06 PM Chair Elkin adjourned the meeting.

Pam Dever, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1144
3/13/2023

Relating to required training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

10:27 AM Chair Elkin opened committee work. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Sen Axtman, Sen Conley, Sen Lemm, and Sen Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

Sen Beard discussed 23.0094.04001 (#26867).

Sen Beard moved amendment.

Sen Conley seconded .

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	Y

VOTE: YES – 6 NO – 0 Absent – 0 Motion PASSED

Sen Beard moved a DO PASS as Amended.

Sen Wobbema seconded.

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	Y

VOTE: YES – 6 NO – 0 Absent – 0 Motion PASSED

Sen Beard will carry the bill.

10:35 AM Chair Elkin adjourned the meeting.

Pam Dever, Committee Clerk

March 10, 2023

At
3-13-23
(1-1)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1144

Page 1, line 1, replace the second "and" with a comma

Page 1, line 1, after "50-11.1-02.4" insert ", and a new subsection to section 50-11.1-03"

Page 1, after line 24, insert:

"SECTION 3. A new subsection to section 50-11.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Any hours of department-approved training related to child care which an applicant completes after submitting the fees and application as required under subsection 8 must be counted toward the licensing annual requirements for the following year."

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1144, as engrossed: Education Committee (Sen. Elkin, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB 1144 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Page 1, line 1, replace the second "and" with a comma

Page 1, line 1, after "50-11.1-02.4" insert ", and a new subsection to section 50-11.1-03"

Page 1, after line 24, insert:

"SECTION 3. A new subsection to section 50-11.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Any hours of department-approved training related to child care which an applicant completes after submitting the fees and application as required under subsection 8 must be counted toward the licensing annual requirements for the following year."

Re-number accordingly

TESTIMONY

HB 1144

To whom it may concern,

I am in opposition to mandated reporter training. At least, I am in opposition to it as a blanket law that applies to everyone. I feel that past career experience in the human service field, or certain college courses, should make providers exempt. For example: before opening up a home daycare, I obtained a bachelor's degree in psychology. I have also worked with foster care youth as a case manager. I have filled out many forms as a mandated reporter myself and I do not feel I need this training. I have so little time the way it is. The requirements and demands of daycare keep increasing and we do not have enough daycares as it is.

Thank you

Megan Buske

January 17, 2023

RE: HB 1144

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Sue Brady, currently I am a licensed group home childcare provider in Bismarck. I have been doing childcare for 37 years. I have a BA in Early Childhood Education. I am also a Step 3 on the QRIS rating scale and am completing Step 4 at this time.

I am writing in favor of this bill. I believe all education in the field of childcare is important and necessary. Thankfully, I have never had to report a case of suspected child abuse or neglect, but I feel that it is important to know how to, if the case should ever arise.

I do believe this mandated training should be included in the total hours we are required to have to maintain our license, and not in addition to.

Sincerely,

Sue Brady

Brady's Family Childcare

Testimony
68th Legislative Assembly
House Education Committee
House Bill 1144
January 18, 2023
Submitted by: Sarah Myers

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1144. My name is Sarah Myers, I've been a pediatric nurse for 7 years, child care health consultant for 21 years. I love children and have always worked with them. I am testifying today as a private citizen.

When I was thinking of testifying and what I would say, I thought of the movie "A Few Good Men" with Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson, Demi Moore. Tom's character asks Demi's character, "why do you like them so much?" Them being soldiers. "Because they sit on a wall and say "nothing is going to harm you tonight, not on my watch". That is how I think of early childhood professionals and the children they take care of. They are there to protect the children in their care on their watch. But to do this, they need the tools. We need to give them the tools...that is what this bill is about...giving early childhood professionals and teachers the tools, in this case education, to protect the children from abuse.

Early childhood professionals/ teachers are mandated reporters. They can get a misdemeanor if they don't report abuse. Most know they are mandated reporters, but some don't know what that means, what the signs/symptoms of abuse are, the types of abuse (neglect, physical, sexual, emotional, etc.), where or how to make a report, etc. How can they protect children if they don't know what to look for, what to do if they suspect, etc.?

This bill would help ensure that they know what to look for, where and how to make a report.

Early childhood professionals spend several hours a day, several days of the week, with the children in their care giving them the opportunity to build trusting relationships where the children may share with them that they are being mistreated by people in their home or in other settings they spend time when they are not in child care. Since the majority of children in child care are under the age of 5 years, early childhood professionals are helping children with their diapering/toileting, changing clothes, etc., so they are able to see bruising, marks, discharge/bleeding, etc. that may otherwise go unnoticed.

Children also can abuse each other. Child care programs provide environments where children are taking naps together, playing together, etc. where children may not be in sight due to supervision and the physical set-up of the environment. As many as 40% of children who are sexually abused are abused by older and more powerful children. It is important for early childhood professionals to be aware of this so they can change their supervision practices or physical environments to keep children in their sight.

Presently, licensed early childhood professionals take Getting Started, which is a required training within 90 days of becoming licensed and employed, which contains information about abuse and being a mandated reporter. This training is a one-time training, and was updated 9/30/21 to include more information on abuse and being a mandated reporter. Unfortunately, there are several providers who have not received this information, despite the importance, specifically those who have been providing care prior to this update.

Licensed early childhood professionals are required to take SIDS training before they can have unsupervised access to infants; SIDS training is a one hour training required on an annual basis if they care for infants. CPR/first aid training is required within 90 days of becoming licensed or employed and they are required to maintain their certification.

Licensed early childhood professionals are required to take annual training hours: Self-declared must take 3 hours; Family providers must take 9 hours; Group providers must take 10 hours; Center/Preschool/School-age must take 13 hours. This training could count towards those hours.

The effects of abuse are life-long. We have an obligation to children to do everything we can as a society to protect them.

One of ways would be to mandate "Mandated Reporter Training" for early childhood professionals/teachers on an annual basis. The training is free, on-line, and 1 hour or less.

Thank you for considering this legislation.

January 16, 2023

RE: HB 1144

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Shanna Brady and I have been a childcare provider in Bismarck for 17 years. I am writing in favor of HB 1144. Far too often I get questions from providers about how they should go about reporting suspected abuse. They seem to get a couple different answers depending on who they ask. I do want to ask that the training be included in our required number of training hours annually and not in addition. I also would like to see it be a free training since it will be a mandatory training.

My only concern for this training would be that it becomes redundant like the annual SIDS training. It is the same training year after year so many providers do not even pay attention. I currently am part of the local childcare association board, Association for Better Childcare, located in Bismarck. Part of my duties are booking our monthly trainings. We currently book at least one abuse training every 3 years. In 2023 we have 2 trainings regarding abuse/neglect. One is just a general child abuse training and the other is regarding sexual behaviors in children that will go over the normal behaviors and the not normal behaviors. The members absolutely love the abuse trainings because it is not the same exact training each time and it is very eye opening. Maybe the solution would be to make this training be mandatory every 3 years instead of annually.

Thanks,

Shanna Brady



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House Bill No. 1144
House Education Committee
Testimony Presented by Seth O'Neill, JD, MSW
Email: soneill@cawsnorthdakota.org
January 18, 2023

Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, my name is Seth O'Neill and I am representing CAWS North Dakota in support of HB1144. CAWS North Dakota is the statewide coalition of the domestic violence and sexual assault programs in North Dakota. Our programs serve victims of sexual assault and domestic violence across the state.

We support this bill because it would require educators to annually certify their completion of a training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. This training is already in existence and can be found at mandatedreporter.pcand.org. The training provides an efficient refresher for mandated reporters on their responsibilities and requirements for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

As a former child protection social worker who received these reports of suspected child abuse or neglect, I know that a majority of reports come from educators. Educators are often the first line of defense against child abuse as they interact with a child on a daily basis. Child protection workers rely on educators to report suspected abuse or neglect. We believe that requiring educators to annually complete this simple training is an important step to ensure the safety of children in North Dakota.

We encourage the committee to give HB1256 a do pass recommendation. I appreciate your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Chairman Owens and Members of the Education Committee.

My name is Christy Dodd and I am the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota. I am here today to speak on behalf of a do pass for HB 1144. Our Mission here at Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota is to empower families to thrive by providing community driven resources that foster safe and nurturing environments for children. When I first graduated from college I worked in a daycare starting out in the toddler room, moved to running the office and discipline and then ultimately became the lead teacher for the preschool classes. I was super young but loved children and felt completely responsible for making sure that the 27 kids in my classroom were ready for kindergarten. I spent 10 hours a day with them facilitating fun hands-on learning so they could tie their shoes, write their names, know their colors, numbers and letters, sit in groups, and go on field trips. I felt the weight of ensuring they were ready for school and safe while in my care but I had no idea that I was a mandated reporter or even how to go about sharing any concerns that I had for a child. After I left the daycare, I ran a child advocacy center in Colorado for 10 years. One of my first jobs was to implement a handbook for our county for mandated reporters walking them through how to make a report of child abuse and educating them about what happened after they made the call. After that each year we went into schools and daycares in our county and provided them with Mandated reporter training because we knew that turnover was high and people forget things especially if it is a training that happens right after you are hired and then you don't get retrained again until you change jobs. One and done training is quickly forgotten you can just ask my son when for the 20th time I've asked him to show me how to shut off closed caption on our TV if it accidentally gets turned on.

Here in ND we have some great resources around Child Abuse Prevention. One of those is a website where mandated reporters can go through training for free in less than one hour. This bill will require them to go through this training once a year so it doesn't get stored way back in our memories. It refreshes their memories and reminds them of not only the mandate they have to report but how to make a report. Our teachers and daycare providers spend hours a day with our children and anyone who is a parent or has spent time with a child knows that they share things whenever they think about it. This training will equip our teachers and daycare providers with the resources and tools to be able to make a report of child abuse and share their concerns to protect the children they are working with and it keeps it in their minds that they are required to do so. Again I am asking you to recommend this as a do pass.

I can now take any questions that the Committee might have.

January 17, 2023
Bill 1144

Chairman Heinert and Members of the Committee:

Hello, my name is Gianna Andress, and I am in support of Bill 1144.

According to the North Dakota Census Bureau, out of all reported cases of child abuse and neglect, a staggering 30% are confirmed each year, the largest concentration concerning children under 1 year of age.

As a new childcare provider within the year of 2022, I felt undereducated and did not know that I was able to report signs of child abuse and neglect. At the daycare where I was employed as a teacher's assistant, a young boy under 2 years of age showed clear signs of developmental delay, emotional abuse, and physical neglect in appearance and health. Although I received training during orientation on how to recognize abuse and neglect in children, I was not told how to report it. Because the management personnel of this childcare facility did not report the situation, I thought I could not do so. If I had received a more thorough education on this topic and been required to become a mandated reporter, I would have not only been capable of but required to help this struggling child, who could now be in a better position during a crucial part of his development.

I petition you, out of concern for abused and neglected children and their caregivers to pass this bill in favor of mandated reporting training for childcare providers in North Dakota.

Thank you for your consideration of my proposal. I stand open for questioning.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the House Education Committee.

My name is Lindsey Burkhardt, and I am offering this testimony not in representation of any organization or group, but as a private citizen of North Dakota and a mother of three young children. I'm unable to provide my testimony verbally today due to travelling to provide training in Devils Lake, ND.

My professional history includes serving as the Director of the SENDCAA Head Start Program, Victim Services for victims of juvenile criminal cases, and a Family Strengthening Specialist for New Americans.

Teachers & childcare providers have a unique responsibility to protect children, but far too often abuse and neglect goes unreported or is covered up. Child abuse – and particularly child sexual abuse – is a significant and particularly destructive problem.

As a mother of a 2-, 5-, and 7-year-old, this bill is something I find absolutely necessary. Mandated reporter training creates accountability for educators because mistreatment can occur at school and at home, mandatory reporting establishes accountability for educators and allows them to ensure all students receive acceptable care and treatment while at school. To ensure that my daughters remain safe while at school & at daycare... this bill is vital.

In the media, there are many reports of educator sexual misconduct across North Dakota. It is estimated that one in ten American students will experience sexual misconduct **by a school employee** by the time they graduate from high school. We can equip educators with the ability to spot signs of abuse but mandating this annual training and provide additional ongoing training to keep students safe.

Throughout the last few years in North Dakota the headlines have read:

- “A woman who ran a daycare in a remote part of western North Dakota has been charged with **horrific acts of child abuse**”
- “A south **Fargo daycare** provider has recently been shut down after being charged with child neglect”
- “5-Month-Old Baby Left With Permanent Brain Damage After Daycare Provider Allegedly Shakes Her”

- “Bismarck Daycare Provider Found Guilty of Child Abuse”

By requiring annual training—abusers who work within licensed childcare facilities will know their colleagues are well educated and equipped to spot the signs of abuse.

I dedicated several years to the Head Start program. Head Start is a federally funded program, and mandates annual training for all staff on being a mandated reporter. Though we had several requirements with little time, Mandated Reporter training was not something that was hard to incorporate into our program training plan. The training we utilized is accessible on the Prevent Child Abuse ND website, it's free, and it takes less than one hour to complete. Teachers in our program were given a timeline to complete the training (within 30 days of the first day of school) and were required to submit a completion certificate to their supervisor to ensure compliance with the federal mandate.

Research suggests that the top two reasons why teachers under-report are (1) lack of knowledge about the signs and symptoms of abuse and (2) fear of making inaccurate reports—so educator training is essential. Research indicates that adult training and education is **one of the most effective ways** to prevent child abuse. Studies suggest that training on child abuse of all types increases identification and reporting by teachers.

Many children across North Dakota spend 5-days a week at school or in childcare facilities. By mandating this training, our educators will be prepared to take the action needed to protect children. Educators and childcare providers are the eyes that see our children on the most regular basis. It would be wonderful to require all mandated reporters to have this training, however, educators and childcare providers see children regularly—whereas a doctor or dentist may only see a child annually or every 6 months. Educators are truly the front lines to protecting children who are being abused.

Annual mandated reporter training will provide educators and childcare providers with the knowledge and skills to help them carry out their responsibilities. Understanding the signs of child abuse and knowing how to make a report are crucial for stopping child abuse in North Dakota. Which is why annual mandated reporting training is so critical. **Annual**

training is not impossible, nor is it asking too much. Our children's safety is worth the hour-long yearly training. North Dakota requires mandated reporting and carries penalties for failing to do so. Providing comprehensive and thorough training for mandated reporters is crucial to help them understand and carry out their legal requirements. For this reason alone, the training should be conducted annually. It is imperative that adults who are entrusted to spend time with or care for our children have the resources to understand how to recognize signs of abuse so that they many serve as the voice for children who often can't speak up for themselves.

We can all agree that one abused child is too many. It takes a village to raise & protect our children. It is our responsibility to ensure that they are safe in all environments. Mandated reporter training is good for children, families, and the future of communities.

Thank you for your time & consideration of HB 1144.

Lindsey Burkhardt
lindseysburkhardt@gmail.com
701-429-4828

Chair Heinert and members of the education committee,

I am writing today in regard to HB1144 proposing to require annual mandated reporter training for members of the education and early childhood communities.

I am neutral in my opinion about this proposed law from the prospective of an early childhood professional since 2005. I understand the importance of mandated reporting with professionals who work with vulnerable populations, but I also feel like an annual mandatory training for early childhood professionals could be better utilized with a shift of focus to something like abusive head trauma with time to reflect on self-care options and stress-reduction strategies for caregivers to prevent child abuse and neglect which could include a section on the duties and responsibilities as a mandated reporter.

I support those who are working to prevent abuse and neglect as well as education on the signs to watch for while working with our youngest citizens.

Michelle Roeszler
Fargo, ND

Chairman Heinert, Vice-Chair Schreiber-Beck, and members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Kathy Busche. I own and operate two childcare programs in Hazen. One program is a group facility licensed for 30. I own the facility and operate a 0-5 program with a current enrollment of 33 children. The second program is my home where I operate a school age program with a license for 30 with 25 children enrolled. The facility is Step 2 in Bright and Early QRIS. Our home program is Step 1 QRIS. I have been operating my business out of my home since 2007 and purchased and renovated the facility opening the second location in January 2022. I have a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from MSUM and providing quality childcare is my passion.

I am sorry I cannot be present to testify in person, but unfortunately, I do not have the backup staff required to be away from our programs at the present time.

I am writing today regarding bill HB 1144. Although it is important for educators and early childhood professionals to be trained in mandated reporting I am concerned that an hour of training on this topic is going to end up similar to the current SIDS training in which providers simply go through the motions of the training but don't actually pay any attention to it. Childcare providers are already overworked and have little time to give to another training. I believe it would be helpful to combine the mandated reporting information into another training such as abusive head trauma and self-care training. I feel providers would benefit more from training on self-care because although we know that abuse happens outside of childcare we also know that providers have also been known to make poor decisions and children have been the victims of those decisions.

I recommend to the committee that an amendment be made to the bill to that ensures this training would be counted towards our yearly total hours required and be provided free of charge.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions the committee might have.

Kathy Busche

Kathaleen Busche (The Children's Playhouse) Group facility

Kathaleen Busche 2.0 Group Home

Hazen, ND 58545

23.0094.02000

Sixty-eighth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

HOUSE BILL NO. 1144

Introduced by

Representatives Schauer, Hanson, O'Brien, Pyle, Satrom, Schreiber-Beck, Steiner, Strinden
Senators Hogan, K. Roers, Weber

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-19 and section 50-11.1-02.4
2 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to required training for mandated reporters of child
3 abuse and neglect.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect - Training.**

8 Each public and nonpublic school teacher, administrator, and counselor **annually in their first**
9 **year of employment and at least one time during each teach license renewal cycle** shall
10 provide documentation to the department of public instruction of the individual's completion of
11 the online interactive training module provided by the department of health and human services
12 for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

13 **SECTION 2.** Section 50-11.1-02.4 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and
14 enacted as follows:

15 **Early childhood services providers - Mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or**
16 **neglect - Training.**

17 An early childhood services provider annually shall provide documentation to the
18 department of the provider's and the provider's staff members' completion of the online
19 interactive training module provided by the department for mandated reporters of suspected
20 child abuse or neglect.



1 HB 1144 – Mandated training for reporters of child abuse and neglect

2 Testimony in opposition or neutral with amendment request

3 Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee, for the record my
4 name is Dr. Aimee Copas and I serve as the executive director for the North Dakota
5 Council of Educational Leaders representing your school leaders in K12 throughout the
6 state the of North Dakota.

7 I come to you in opposition today not because understanding what being a mandated
8 reporter means in North Dakota, but rather due to the annual mandate coupled with the
9 need for local districts to determine how to utilize the days established by the state for
10 professional development so that the development is focused on the PD needs of that
11 district at that time. It is also for a general level of respect for those in the profession
12 that they do not need to be retrained on the same content annual as they have the
13 capacity to retain information – after all – all these folks are educators. Training
14 mandates have proven to be a source of extreme frustration and ultimately often a large
15 amount of redundancy is found.

16 We respect, however, the intent behind this bill – which brings me to my amendment.
17 We’d request that at the minimum we adjust the frequency of this bill. As administrators
18 and leaders, we’d suggest that this training be mandated in your first year as a contracted
19 teacher, and then again once during each license renewal cycle. Considering that
20 educators have always been mandated reporters and that understanding, and
21 responsibility is nothing new to us, that training at this level of frequency is appropriate.

22 Thank you for considering this option as you discuss this bill.

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality education
for all students in North Dakota.*

Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Government Lead and Special Projects: Kevin Hoherz

House Bill No. 1144
House Education Committee
Testimony Presented by Amy Kempfer
Position: In Favor
Email: dramv@movechirond.com
01/19/2023

Chairman Heinert and members of the Committee, my name is Amy Kempfer. I am a chiropractor from Fargo, ND. I have also served as an adjunct instructor at various two and four year institutions in North Dakota. I dedicate much of my extra time each year volunteering for causes that advocate for safer childhoods for the children of North Dakota.

I support this bill for many reasons. To start, I am a mandated reporter myself. I didn't learn much about being a mandated reporter throughout my eight years at a post-secondary institution or even through the hundreds of hours of continuing education I have participated in since being a mandated reporter. Some of this continuing education was specifically aimed at providers who interact with children. Any message in training seems to be the same thing each time; you are a mandated reporter and must report any suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency in your state. I honestly figured I would just know it if I saw it. After spending the time that I have getting educated in the non-profit world about child abuse and neglect, I couldn't have been more wrong. Child abuse doesn't always look like that bruised, malnourished, and unhygienic kid sitting in a desk. It's simply not as clear cut as that.

The reality is most reports of suspected child abuse and neglect come from educators. They are often times a trusted adult that spends the most time with children. Adding in an annual training requirement seems like a cost-effective way to strengthen the knowledge and efficiency of our front line of defense to this issue.

I am also so happy to see that early childhood professionals and those working at licensed daycares are included. These educators spend their entire day caring for our most vulnerable children who sometimes don't even know the words yet to say something even if they had the opportunity. These professionals also help young children with diapering and clothing and may see the physical signs of abuse that may otherwise go unnoticed.

I'm confident the people who oppose this bill will say things like they already have too much training to do, or that the training is redundant. While I can empathize with how much training needs to be done each year for everyone with a license everywhere- I am not sure I can think of a more important topic. The reality is our laws surrounding things like child abuse, neglect, maltreatment, gross sexual imposition, corruption of a minor, etc. are changing constantly. As you all know, the state recently changed essentially our entire juvenile code. We have multiple new human service zones now, and a centralized reporting process. It is a misdemeanor offense to not report suspected abuse or neglect as a mandated reporter, but if you aren't confident what our NDCC defines this as, how can you feel confident in knowing you are reporting what you are supposed to? Training should increase the quality and efficiency of the reporting process. This means we are ensuring that the things that need to be reported are, the things that don't constitute child abuse or neglect aren't, and the process is completed correctly.

Continuing education is vital. One of the most dangerous attitudes in my mind is thinking we know it all or we know enough. After all, those who think they know it all have no way of finding out that they don't. If we don't have the time to make sure everyone working with children knows how to effectively protect them, what do we have the time for?

Thank you for your time today. I encourage your committee to give **HB1144** a Do Pass recommendation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Amy Kempfer
Fargo, ND

HB 1144**Testimony of Mary Frances Keller****January 18, 2023**

Good morning, my name is Mary Frances Keller, and I am a social work student. I am here in favor of HB1144. My work experience with children began in 2016 and I have been required to go through mandated reporter training myself on several occasions. During the 2018-2019 school year, while working as a childcare teacher I had to call Child Protective Services for a case of suspected child abuse. Had I not been required to re-certify as a mandated reporter in the fall of that school year I would not have been as equipped to make that difficult call and advocate for the safety of that child. I had been trained previously but having not used what I had learned, much of it was lost until I was trained again. This training we are speaking about today is efficient, simple, and helpful for those of us who work with children. While it may be viewed as redundant, I believe that it is necessary to ensure action from educators and early childhood service providers. Thank you for your time.

Chairman Nathe, Vice Chair Swiontek, Members of the committee, my name is Hailey Boekelheide. I appear today in support of House bill 1144.

I am a university student, and I hope to start a career and raise a family in North Dakota. As a future mother looking to raise children in this state, and it would bring me great comfort knowing I am sending my children to schools that are full of well-trained educators. Educators, who, if the worst were to happen, are prepared to defend the safety of all children and their peers.

North Dakota educators play a vital role in children's' lives. This bill empowers those individuals to recognize the warning signs of abuse and act swiftly. The training, which I have completed twice in three years, is both edifying and insightful. It can be found at <https://mandatedreporter.pcand.org/> It gives mandated reporters additional confidence to identify the signs of abuse and it works to keep North Dakota Children safe.

Because of this reason, I ask the committee to recommend a DO PASS for bill 1144. Thank you for your time and I stand for questions.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the House Education Committee.

My name is Austen Schauer, representing West Fargo, District 13.

HB 1144 is an effort to **reduce** child abuse in North Dakota through **education** and **prevention**.

If passed, each public and nonpublic teacher, administrator and counselor would complete online training on the prevention of child abuse.

The yearly training would also include childcare providers as there are approximately 36 thousand children in childcare centers.

The training is free, web-based, and takes about 40 minutes. DHS can do face to face training if requested.

Many individuals in our state are required to be mandated reporters, yet **none** are required **by law** to take training to understand the scope of their role as reporters.

Yet, if a mandated reporter fails to report—they could face serious legal consequences.

How can we require individuals to serve in that important role yet not educate or train them on spotting the signs of abuse and neglect and how to report it?

Research estimates the percentage of teachers who are knowledgeable about the signs of abuse and procedures for reporting varies from **three to ten percent**.

Educators and childcare providers are the first line of defense when it comes to reporting.

Mandated reporter training covers the information and tools necessary to identify and report concerns of child abuse or neglect.

This includes spotting the signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Evidence shows the more educators are trained, the **less likely** abuse and neglect happens.

The same is true with **childcare providers**.

Currently, there is no state law that requires childcare providers to take training specific to childcare abuse.

Sex crimes against children continues to be a devastating problem in this country.

Research shows about one in every four girls and one in every 13 boys are sexually abused.

16 out of one thousand kids, ages 12-17, are victims of rape or sexual assault.

This blight on our children happens in nearly every setting; from home, to church, to schools.

Training isn't everything, but **it is everything** to a vulnerable child when a well-trained professional sees evidence of child abuse and neglect and reports it.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, we are asking for a **DO PASS** recommendation on HB 1144.

I am open to questions you may have.

23.0094.02001
Title.04000

Adopted by the Education Committee

January 25, 2023

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1144

Page 1, after line 7 insert "1."

Page 1, after line 11, insert:

"2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count towards license renewal."

Page 1, after line 15 insert "1."

Page 1, after line 19, insert:

"2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count towards license renewal."

Renumber accordingly

Testimony
68th Legislative Assembly
Senate Education Committee
House Bill 1144
March 7, 2023
Submitted by: Sarah Myers

Chairman and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1144. My name is Sarah Myers, I've been a pediatric nurse for 7 years, child care health consultant for 21 years. I love children and have always worked with them. I am testifying today as a private citizen.

When I was thinking of testifying and what I would say, I thought of the movie "Few Good Men" with Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson, Demi Moore. Tom's character asks Demi's character, "why do you like them so much?" Them being soldiers. "Because they sit on a wall and say "nothing is going to harm you tonight, not on my watch". That is how I think of early childhood professionals and the children they take care of. They are there to protect the children in their care on their watch. But to do this, they need the tools. We need to give them the tools...that is what this bill is about...giving early childhood professionals and teachers the tools, in this case education, to protect the children from abuse.

Early childhood professionals/ teachers are mandated reporters. They can get a misdemeanor if they don't report abuse. Most know they are mandated reporters, but some don't know what that means, what the signs/symptoms of abuse are, the types of abuse (neglect, physical, sexual, emotional, etc.), where or how to make a report, etc. How can they protect children if they don't know what to look for, what to do if they suspect, etc.?

This bill would help ensure that they know what to look for, where and how to make a report.

Early childhood professionals spend several hours a day, several days of the week, with the children in their care giving them the opportunity to build trusting relationships where the children may share with them that they are being mistreated by people in their home or in other settings they spend time when they are not in child care. Since the majority of children in child care are under the age of 5 years, early childhood professionals are helping children with their diapering/toileting, changing clothes, etc., so they are able to see bruising, marks, discharge/bleeding, etc. that may otherwise go unnoticed.

Children also can abuse each other. Child care programs provide environments where children are taking naps together, playing together, etc. where children may not be in sight due to supervision and the physical set-up of the environment. It is important for early childhood professionals to be aware of this so they can change their supervision practices or physical environments to keep children in their sight.

Presently, licensed early childhood professionals take Getting Started, which is a required training within 90 days of becoming licensed and employed, which contains information about abuse and being a mandated reporter. This training is a one-time training, and was just updated 9/30/21 to include more information on abuse and being a mandated reporter. Unfortunately, there are several providers who have not received this information, despite the importance, specifically those who have been providing care prior to this update.

Licensed early childhood services providers are required to take SIDS training before they can have unsupervised access to infants; SIDS training is a one hour training required on an annual basis if they care for infants. CPR/first aid training is required within 90 days of becoming licensed or employed and providers are required to maintain their certification.

Licensed early childhood services providers are required to take annual training hours: Self-declared must take 3 hours; Family providers must take 9 hours; Group providers must take 10 hours; Center/Preschool/School-age must take 13 hours. This training could count towards those hours.

The effects of abuse are life-long. We have an obligation to children to do everything we can as a society to protect them.

One of ways would be to mandate "Mandated Reporting Training" for early childhood professionals/teachers on an annual basis. The training is free, on-line, and 1 hour or less.

Thank you for considering this legislation.

Senator Elkin and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Christy Dodd and I am the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota. I am here today to speak on behalf of a do pass for HB 1144. Our Mission here at Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota is to empower families to thrive by providing community driven resources that foster safe and nurturing environments for children. When I first graduated from college I worked in a daycare starting out in the toddler room, moved to running the office and discipline and then ultimately became the lead teacher for the preschool classes. I was super young but loved children and felt completely responsible for making sure that the 27 kids in my classroom were ready for kindergarten. I spent 10 hours a day with them facilitating fun hands-on learning so they could tie their shoes, write their names, know their colors, numbers and letters, sit in groups, and go on field trips. I felt the weight of ensuring they were ready for school and safe while in my care but I had no idea that I was a mandated reporter or even how to go about sharing any concerns that I had for a child. After I left the daycare, I ran a child advocacy center in Colorado for 10 years. One of my first jobs was to implement a handbook for our county for mandated reporters walking them through how to make a report of child abuse and educating them about what happened after they made the call. After that each year we went into schools and daycares in our county and provided them with Mandated reporter training because we knew that turnover was high and people forget things especially if it is a training that happens right after you are hired and then you don't get retrained again until you change jobs. One and done training is quickly forgotten you can just ask my son when for the 20th time I've asked him to show me how the Xbox remote buttons work for a game.

Here in ND we have some great resources around Child Abuse Prevention. Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota houses the mandated reporter training on our website (www.pcand.org) where across the top is the link for mandated reporters. This training was developed in collaboration with North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services. This web-based interactive training is self paced and at the end of the interactive training, participants are required to take a brief assessment to assess knowledge gain and obtain a certificate upon successful completion of the training. It took me 20 minutes to go through all of it. This bill will require teachers and childcare workers to go through this training once a year so it doesn't get stored way back in their memories. It refreshes their memories and reminds them of not only the mandate they have to report but how to make a report, signs of abuse, and outcomes of making a report. Our teachers and childcare providers spend hours a day with our children and anyone who is a parent or has spent time with a child knows that they share things whenever they think about it. This training will equip our teachers and daycare providers with the resources and tools to be able to make a report of child abuse and share their concerns to protect the children they are working with and it keeps it in their minds that they are required to do so. Again I am asking you to recommend this as a do pass.

I can now take any questions that the Committee might have.



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House Bill No. 1144
Senate Education Committee
Testimony Presented by Seth O'Neill, JD, MSW
March 7, 2023

Chairman Elkin and members of the Committee, my name is Seth O'Neill and I am representing CAWS North Dakota in support of HB1144. CAWS North Dakota is the statewide coalition of the domestic violence and sexual assault programs in North Dakota. Our programs serve victims of sexual assault and domestic violence across the state.

We support this bill because it would require educators to annually certify their completion of a training for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. This training is already in existence and can be found at mandatedreporter.pcand.org. The training provides an efficient refresher for mandated reporters on their responsibilities and requirements for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

As a former child protection social worker who received these reports of suspected child abuse or neglect, I know that a majority of reports come from educators. Educators are often the first line of defense against child abuse as they interact with a child on a daily basis. Child protection workers rely on educators to report suspected abuse or neglect. We believe that requiring educators to annually complete this simple training is an important step to ensure the safety of children in North Dakota.

For these reasons, we are in support of this bill and encourage the committee to give HB 1144 a do pass recommendation. I appreciate your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.



1 HB 1144 – Mandated training for reporters of child abuse and neglect

2 Testimony in opposition or neutral with amendment request

3 Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record my
4 name is Dr. Aimee Copas and I serve as the executive director for the North Dakota
5 Council of Educational Leaders representing your school leaders in K12 throughout the
6 state the of North Dakota.

7 I come to you in opposition today not because understanding what being a mandated
8 reporter means in North Dakota, but rather due to the annual mandate coupled with the
9 need for local districts to determine how to utilize the days established by the state for
10 professional development so that the development is focused on the PD needs of that
11 district at that time. It is also for a general level of respect for those in the profession
12 that they do not need to be retrained on the same content annual as they have the
13 capacity to retain information – after all – all these folks are educators. Training
14 mandates have proven to be a source of extreme frustration and ultimately often a large
15 amount of redundancy is found.

16 We respect, however, the intent behind this bill – which brings me to my amendment.
17 We’d request that at the minimum we adjust the frequency of this bill. As administrators
18 and leaders, we’d suggest that this training be mandated in your first year as a contracted
19 teacher, and then again once during each license renewal cycle. Considering that
20 educators have always been mandated reporters and that understanding, and
21 responsibility is nothing new to us, that training at this level of frequency is appropriate.

22 Thank you for considering this option as you discuss this bill.

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality education
for all students in North Dakota.*

Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Government Lead and Special Projects: Kevin Hoherz

House Bill No. 1144
Senate Education Committee
Testimony Presented by Amy Kempfer
Position: In Favor
Email: dramv@movechirond.com
03/07/2023

Chairman Elkin and members of the Committee, my name is Amy Kempfer. I am a chiropractor from Fargo, ND. I have also served as an adjunct instructor at various two- and four-year institutions in North Dakota. I dedicate much of my extra time each year volunteering for causes that advocate for safer childhoods for the children of North Dakota.

I support this bill for many reasons. To start, I am a mandated reporter myself. I didn't learn much about being a mandated reporter throughout my eight years at a post-secondary institution or even through the hundreds of hours of continuing education I have participated in since being a mandated reporter. Some of this continuing education was specifically aimed at providers who interact with children. Any message in training seems to be the same thing each time; you are a mandated reporter and must report any suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency in your state. I honestly figured I would just know it if I saw it. After spending the time that I have getting educated in the non-profit world about child abuse and neglect, I couldn't have been more wrong. Child abuse doesn't always look like that bruised, malnourished, and unhygienic kid sitting in a desk. It's simply not as clear cut as that.

The reality is most reports of suspected child abuse and neglect come from educators. They are often times a trusted adult that spends the most time with children. Adding in an annual training requirement seems like a cost-effective way to strengthen the knowledge and efficiency of our front line of defense to this issue.

I am also so happy to see that early childhood professionals and those working at licensed daycares are included. These educators spend their entire day caring for our most vulnerable children who sometimes don't even know the words yet to say something even if they had the opportunity. These professionals also help young children with diapering and clothing and may see the physical signs of abuse that may otherwise go unnoticed.

I'm confident the people who oppose this bill will say things like they already have too much training to do, or that the training is redundant. While I can empathize with how much training needs to be done each year for everyone with a license everywhere- I am not sure I can think of a more important topic. The reality is our laws surrounding things like child abuse, neglect, maltreatment, gross sexual imposition, corruption of a minor, etc. are changing constantly. As you all know, the state recently changed essentially our entire juvenile code. We have multiple new human service zones now, and a centralized reporting process. It is a misdemeanor offense to not report suspected abuse or neglect as a mandated reporter, but if you aren't confident what our NDCC defines this as, how can you feel confident in knowing you are reporting what you are supposed to?

The people who would oppose this bill may mention the necessity of doing it this frequently. In my profession, we are required to take 3 hours of Boundary Hours every 3 years, and this could include training for mandated reporters. Did I learn appropriate boundaries in school? Absolutely. However, there are unfortunately providers who continually need reminders on what appropriate boundaries are and to stress the importance of the boundaries in place.

I can speak from the news cycle in Fargo recently, and we have had:

- Keven Kennedy- March, 2022- Fargo South High School English Teacher- fired for inappropriate boundaries and comments with students
- Ronald Thompson- Sentenced September 2022 for luring a minor by computer
- Sebastian Tackling- December 2022- West Fargo Band Teacher- Corruption of a Minor (minor was his student)
- Ruthie Anne Carlson- Jan 2023- FPS Employee- charged with GSI (minor was her student)
- Alyssa Holzheimer- Dec 2022- daycare center teacher being charged with child abuse
- Daniel Stoa- Feb 2023- lawsuit filed in retaliation for reporting a coach for inappropriately touching children

This is just over the last couple months, in one city. Clearly, abuse and neglect is not only happening at home- **it is still happening in our schools and daycares and with school and daycare employees.** Ensuring all educators understand the standard and the law I think is of utmost importance. Ignorance simply can't be an excuse.

Another fear from the people who oppose this bill is an increase in the amount of "frivolous claims". I believe more training would likely prevent what could be considered a frivolous claim, or a claim that doesn't meet the requirements for reporting. Training should increase the quality and efficiency of the reporting process. This means we are ensuring that the things that need to be reported are, the things that don't constitute child abuse or neglect aren't, and the process is completed correctly.

This training is free, already created, and available, and takes less than an hour in a self-paced course. Continuing education is vital. One of the most dangerous attitudes in my mind is thinking we know it all or we know enough. After all, those who think they know it all have no way of finding out that they don't. If we don't have the time to make sure everyone working with children knows how to effectively protect them, what do we have the time for?

Thank you for your time today. I encourage your committee to give **HB1144** a Do Pass recommendation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Amy Kempfer
Fargo, ND

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman Elkin, and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Lindsey Burkhardt, and I am offering this testimony not in representation of any organization or group, but as a private citizen of North Dakota and a mother of three young children.

My professional history includes serving as the Director of the SENDCAA Head Start Program, Victim Services for victims of juvenile criminal cases, and a Family Strengthening Specialist for New Americans. Teachers & childcare providers have a unique responsibility to protect children, but far too often abuse and neglect goes unreported or is covered up. Child abuse – and particularly child sexual abuse – is a significant and particularly destructive problem. As a mother of a 2-, 5-, and 7-year-old, this bill is something I find necessary.

Mandated reporter training creates accountability for educators because mistreatment can occur at school and at home, mandatory reporting establishes accountability for educators and allows them to ensure all students receive acceptable care and treatment while at school. To ensure that my daughters remain safe while at school & at daycare... this bill is vital.

In the media, there are many reports of educator sexual misconduct across North Dakota. It is estimated that one in ten American students will experience sexual misconduct by a school employee by the time they graduate from high school. We can equip educators with the ability to spot signs of abuse but mandating this annual training and providing additional ongoing training to keep students safe.

Throughout the last few years in North Dakota the headlines have read:

- “A woman who ran a daycare in a remote part of western North Dakota has been charged with horrific acts of child abuse”
- “A south Fargo daycare provider has recently been shut down after being charged with child neglect”
- “5-Month-Old Baby Left With Permanent Brain Damage After Daycare Provider Allegedly Shakes Her”
- “Bismarck Daycare Provider Found Guilty of Child Abuse”

By requiring annual training—abusers who work within licensed childcare facilities will know their colleagues are well-educated and equipped to spot the

signs of abuse.

I dedicated several years to the Head Start program. Head Start is a federally funded program, and mandates annual training for all staff on being a mandated reporter. Though we had several requirements with little time, Mandated Reporter training was not something that was hard to incorporate into our program training plan. The training we utilized is accessible on the Prevent Child Abuse ND website, it's free, and it takes less than one hour to complete. Teachers in our program were given a timeline to complete the training (within 30 days of the first day of school) and were required to submit a completion certificate to their supervisor to ensure compliance with the federal mandate.

Research suggests that the top two reasons why teachers underreport are (1) lack of knowledge about the signs and symptoms of abuse and (2) fear of making inaccurate reports—so educator training is essential. Research indicates that adult training and education is one of the most effective ways to prevent child abuse. Studies suggest that training on child abuse of all types increases identification and reporting by teachers.

Many children across North Dakota spend 5-days a week at school or in childcare facilities. By mandating this training, our educators will be prepared to take the action needed to protect children. Educators and childcare providers are the eyes that see our children on the most regular basis. It would be wonderful to require all mandated reporters to have this training, however, educators and childcare providers see children regularly—whereas a doctor or dentist may only see a child annually or every 6 months. Educators are truly the front lines to protecting children who are being abused.

Annual mandated reporter training will provide educators and childcare providers with the knowledge and skills to help them carry out their responsibilities. Understanding the signs of child abuse and knowing how to make a report are crucial for stopping child abuse in North Dakota. Which is why annual mandated reporting training is so critical. **Annual** training is not impossible, nor is it asking too much. Our children's safety is worth the hour-long yearly training. North Dakota requires mandated reporting and carries penalties for failing to do so. Providing comprehensive and thorough training for mandated reporters is crucial to help them understand and carry out their legal requirements. For this reason alone, the training should be conducted annually. It is imperative that adults who are entrusted to spend time with or care for our

children have the resources to understand how to recognize signs of abuse so that they may serve as the voice for children who often can't speak up for themselves.

We can all agree that one abused child is too many. It takes a village to raise & protect our children. It is our responsibility to ensure that they are safe in all environments. Mandated reporter training is good for children, families, and the future of communities.

Thank you for your time & consideration of HB 1144.

Lindsey Burkhardt
lindseysburkhardt@gmail.com

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Senate Education Committee.

My name is Austen Schauer, representing West Fargo, District 13.

HB 1144 is an effort to **reduce** child abuse in North Dakota through **education** and **prevention**.

If passed, each public and nonpublic teacher, administrator and counselor would complete **online training** on the prevention of child abuse.

This training must qualify for **continuing education credits** that count toward license renewal.

The **yearly training** would include childcare providers as there are approximately **36 thousand children** in childcare centers.

The training is **free, web-based**, and takes about a half hour. DHS can do **face to face** training if requested.

Many individuals in our state are required to be mandated reporters, yet **none** is required **by law** to take training to understand the scope of their role as reporters.

Yet, if a mandated reporter **fails to report**—they could face **serious** legal consequences.

How can we require individuals to serve in that important role yet not educate or train them on spotting the signs of abuse and neglect and how to report it?

Research estimates the percentage of teachers who are knowledgeable about the signs of abuse and procedures for reporting varies from **three to ten percent**.

Educators and childcare providers are the first line of defense when it comes to reporting.

Annual reporter training covers the information and tools necessary to identify and report concerns of child abuse or neglect.

This includes spotting the signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Evidence shows the more educators are trained, the **less likely** abuse and neglect happens.

The same is true with **childcare providers**.

Currently, there is no state law that requires childcare providers to take training specific to childcare abuse.

Sex crimes against children continues to be a devastating problem in this country.

Research shows about one in every four girls and one in every 13 boys are sexually abused.

16 out of one thousand kids, ages 12-17, are victims of rape or sexual assault.

This blight on our children happens in nearly every setting; **from home, to church, to schools**.

Training isn't everything, but it is **everything** to a vulnerable child when a well-trained professional sees evidence of child abuse and neglect and reports it.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, we are asking for a **DO PASS** recommendation on **HB 1144**.

Thank you for your time and I am open to questions.

23.0094.04001

FIRST ENGROSSMENT

Sixty-eighth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1144

Introduced by

Representatives Schauer, Hanson, O'Brien, Pyle, Satrom, Schreiber-Beck, Steiner, Strinden
Senators Hogan, K. Roers, Weber

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-19~~and~~, section
2 50-11.1-02.4, and a new subsection to section 50-11.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code,
3 relating to required training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect - Training.**

- 8 1. Each public and nonpublic school teacher, administrator, and counselor annually shall
9 provide documentation to the department of public instruction of the individual's
10 completion of the online interactive training module provided by the department of
11 health and human services for mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or
12 neglect.
- 13 2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license
14 renewal.

15 **SECTION 2.** Section 50-11.1-02.4 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and
16 enacted as follows:

17 **Early childhood services providers - Mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or**
18 **neglect - Training.**

- 19 1. An early childhood services provider annually shall provide documentation to the
20 department of the provider's and the provider's staff members' completion of the online
21 interactive training module provided by the department for mandated reporters of
22 suspected child abuse or neglect.
- 23 2. This training must qualify for continuing education credits that count toward license
24 renewal.

1 | **SECTION 3.** A new subsection to section 50-11.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is
2 | created and enacted as follows:

3 | Any hours of department-approved training related to child care which an applicant
4 | completes after submitting the fees and application as required under subsection 8
5 | must be counted toward the licensing annual requirements for the following year.