

2023 SENATE JUDICIARY

SB 2185

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
1/16/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.

4:32 PM Madam Chair Larson opened the hearing.

Present are Madam Chair Larson, and Senators Myrdal, Luick, Estenson, Braunberger, Sickler and Paulson.

Discussion Topics:

- Department of Human Services
- Pregnancy resources

4:33 PM Senator Myrdal introduced the bill.

4:41 PM Christopher Dodson, North Dakota Catholic Conference, testified in favor of the bill and offered written testimony #13535.

4:46 PM Linda Thorson, Concerned Women of America of North Dakota testified by TEAMS in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #13337.

4:50 PM Jacob Thomsen North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action testified in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #13879.

4:53 PM Kim Mertz, Healthy and Safe Communities, Section Director within the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services testified neutral on the bill and provided written testimony #13540.

4:48 PM Sierra Heitkamp, Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life testified in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #13877.

5:02 PM Madam Chair Larson closed the public hearing.

5:02 Chairman Larson adjourned the meeting.

Rick Schuchard, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
1/18/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.
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2:09 PM **Madam Chair Larson** called the meeting to order.

Madam Chair Larson, Senators Myrdal, Luick, Estenson, Braunberger, Sickler, and Paulson were present.

Discussion Topics:

- Amendment discussion
- Remove sunset clause
- Committee action

2:10 PM Senator Myrdal introduced amendments. #17205

2:17 PM Senator Myrdal moved to **Amendment** (testimony #17205)

2:17 PM Senator Luick seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	Y
Senator Judy Estenson	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion passed. 7-0-0

2:18 PM Senator Myrdal motioned a **DO PASS** as Amended.

2:18 PM Senator Luick seconded.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	N
Senator Judy Estenson	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion passed. 6-1-0

Senate Judiciary Committee

SB 2185

January 18, 2023

Page 2

Senator Paulson will carry the bill

2:18 PM Madam Chair Larson ended the meeting.

Patricia Wilkens, Committee Clerk

January 18, 2023

AGG
1-18-23
(1-1)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2185

Page 1, line 6, remove "- **ONE-TIME FUNDING**"

Page 1, line 11, after the second comma insert "maternal and childbirth life services,"

Page 1, line 21, remove "The funding provided in this section is considered a one-time funding item."

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2185: Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2185 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Page 1, line 6, remove "- **ONE-TIME FUNDING**"

Page 1, line 11, after the second comma insert "maternal and childbirth life services,"

Page 1, line 21, remove "The funding provided in this section is considered a one-time funding item."

Renumber accordingly

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
1/25/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.
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9:38 AM Chairman Larson opened the meeting.

Chairman Larson and Senators Myrdal, Luick, Estenson, Sickler, Paulson and Braunberger are present.

Discussion Topics:

- Bill process

Committee had general discussion.

9:42 AM Chairman Larson closed the meeting.

Rick Schuchard, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
2/6/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.

3:26 PM Chairman Larson opened the meeting.
Chairman Larson and Senators Myrdal, Luick, Estenson, Sickler, Paulson and Braunberger are present.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

3:27 PM Senator Paulson moved Do Pass on SB 2185 as Amended and Refer to Appropriations.
Senator Myrdal seconded.

3:27 PM Roll call vote is taken.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	Y
Senator Judy Estenson	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion passed. 7-0-0

Senator Paulson will carry the bill.

This bill does not affect workforce development.

3:27 PM Chairman Larson closed the meeting.

Rick Schuchard, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2185: Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2185 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Page 1, line 6, remove "- **ONE-TIME FUNDING**"

Page 1, line 11, after the second comma insert "maternal and childbirth life services,"

Page 1, line 21, remove "The funding provided in this section is considered a one-time funding item."

Renumber accordingly

2023 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2185

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
2/16/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.

9:30 AM Chairman Bekkedahl opened the hearing on SB 2185.

Members present : Senators Bekkedahl, Krebsbach, Burckhard, Davison, Dever, Dwyer, Erbele, Kreun, Meyer, Roers, Schaible, Sorvaag, Vedaa, Wanzek, Rust, and Mathern.

Discussion Topics:

- Pregnancy and parenting website

9:30 AM Senator Janne Myrdal introduced the bill, no written testimony

9:34 AM Senator Sorvaag moved DO PASS.
Senator Wanzek seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Karen K. Krebsbach	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Curt Kreun	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	A
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Jim P. Roers	Y
Senator David S. Rust	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Shawn Vedaa	A
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion passed 14-0-2

Senator Paulson will carry the bill.

9:36 AM Chairman Bekkedahl closed the hearing.

Kathleen Hall, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2185, as engrossed: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Bekkedahl, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2185 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

2023 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

SB 2185

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
3/14/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.

Chairman Weisz called the meeting to order at 11:10 AM.

Chairman Robin Weisz, Vice Chairman Matthew Ruby, Reps. Karen A. Anderson, Mike Beltz, Clayton Fegley, Kathy Frelich, Dawson Holle, Dwight Kiefert, Carrie McLeod, Todd Porter, Brandon Prichard, Karen M. Rohr, Jayme Davis, and Gretchen Dobervich present. Rep. Gretchen Dobervich not present.

Discussion Topics:

- Alternatives to abortion
- Life-affirming healthcare
- Website development

Sen. Myrdal introduced SB 2185.

Christopher Dodson, Executive Director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference, supportive testimony #24579.

Sierra Heitkamp, Director of the North Dakota Right to Life, supportive testimony #24623.

Kim Mertz, with the Department of Health and Human Services, answered questions from the committee.

Additional written testimony:

Scott Baker, VP of Public Affairs, Choose Life Coalition, #24373

Linda Thorson, State Director, Concerned Women for America of ND, #23833

Chairman Weisz adjourned the meeting at 11:26 AM.

Phillip Jacobs, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
3/15/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an emergency.

Chairman Weisz called the meeting to order at 3:53 PM.

Chairman Robin Weisz, Vice Chairman Matthew Ruby, Reps. Karen A. Anderson, Mike Beltz, Clayton Fegley, Kathy Frelich, Dawson Holle, Dwight Kiefert, Carrie McLeod, Todd Porter, Brandon Prichard, Karen M. Rohr, Jayme Davis, and Gretchen Dobervich. All present.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee work

Chairman Weisz called for a discussion on SB 2185

Representative Ruby moved an amendment to replace .org with .gov on page 1 line 18 (23.0521.03001).

Seconded by Representative Beltz.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Representative McLeod moves a do pass as amended and rerefer to appropriations on SB 2185.

Seconded by Representative Anderson.

Roll call vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Robin Weisz	Y
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Karen A. Anderson	Y
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	N
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	N
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	Y
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Carrie McLeod	Y

Representative Todd Porter	Y
Representative Brandon Prichard	Y
Representative Karen M. Rohr	Y

Motion carries 12-2-0

Carried by Representative Anderson.

Chairman Weisz adjourned the meeting at 4:01 PM.

Phillip Jacobs, Committee Clerk

23.0521.03001
Title.04000

Adopted by the House Human Services
Committee

March 15, 2023

AG
3-15-23
(1-1)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2185

Page 1, line 18, replace "life.nd.org" with "life.nd.gov"

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2185, as engrossed: Human Services Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (12 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2185 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 18, replace "life.nd.org" with "life.nd.gov"

Renumber accordingly

2023 HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2185

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee
Brynhild Haugland Room, State Capitol

SB 2185
3/30/2023

BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website
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8:40 AM Chairman Vigesaa Called the meeting to order and roll call was taken-

ALL Members Present; Chairman Vigesaa, Representative Kempenich, Representative B. Anderson, Representative Bellew, Representative Brandenburg, Representative Hanson, Representative Kreidt, Representative Martinson, Representative Mitskog, Representative Meier, Representative Mock, Representative Monson, Representative Nathe, Representative J. Nelson, Representative O'Brien, Representative Pyle, Representative Richter, Representative Sanford, Representative Schatz, Representative Schobinger, Representative Strinden, Representative G. Stemen and Representative Swiontek.

Discussion Topics

- Establish New Website
- Abortion Alternatives

Representative Weisz- Introduces the bill and its purpose.

Committee Discussion

Representative Mock Move to amend by dropping amount to 10 thousand dollars, remove sentence, line 14 and ends on line 17, and remove last sentence, line 19 to 21

Representative Hanson Seconds the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	N
Representative Keith Kempenich	Y
Representative Bert Anderson	N
Representative Larry Bellew	N
Representative Mike Brandenburg	N
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Gary Kreidt	N
Representative Bob Martinson	N
Representative Lisa Meier	N
Representative Alisa Mitskog	Y
Representative Corey Mock	Y
Representative David Monson	N
Representative Mike Nathe	N
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y

Representative Emily O'Brien	N
Representative Brandy Pyle	N
Representative David Richter	N
Representative Mark Sanford	N
Representative Mike Schatz	N
Representative Randy A. Schobinger	N
Representative Greg Stemen	N
Representative Michelle Strinden	Y
Representative Steve Swiontek	N

Motion Fails 6-17-0

Representative J. Nelson- Move a Do Not Pass

Representative Kreidt Seconds the Motion

Committee Discussion Roll call vote

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	N
Representative Keith Kempenich	N
Representative Bert Anderson	N
Representative Larry Bellew	N
Representative Mike Brandenburg	Y
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Gary Kreidt	Y
Representative Bob Martinson	Y
Representative Lisa Meier	N
Representative Alisa Mitskog	Y
Representative Corey Mock	Y
Representative David Monson	Y
Representative Mike Nathe	Y
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y
Representative Emily O'Brien	Y
Representative Brandy Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y
Representative Mark Sanford	Y
Representative Mike Schatz	N
Representative Randy A. Schobinger	Y
Representative Greg Stemen	Y
Representative Michelle Strinden	Y
Representative Steve Swiontek	y

Motion Carries 17-6-0 Representative J. Nelson will carry the bill

9:17 AM Chairman Vigesaa Closed the meeting for SB 2185

Risa Berube, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2185, as engrossed and amended: Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (17 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2185, as amended, was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

TESTIMONY

SB 2185

CONCERNED
WOMEN *for* AMERICA
LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

January 16, 2023
Senate Judiciary Committee
Testimony in Support of SB 2185

Chairwoman Diane Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am Linda Thorson, State Director for Concerned Women for America (CWA) of North Dakota. Today, I am testifying for Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee in support of SB 2185.

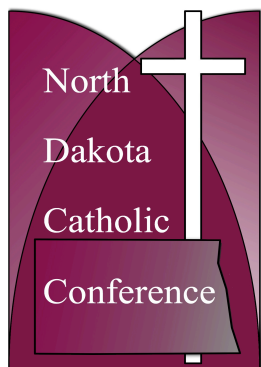
As the largest public policy women's organization in the nation and our state, CWA of North Dakota strongly supports SB 2185. SB 2185 is a commonsense bill that would provide mothers with information and links to social services, financial assistance, adoption services, pregnancy and parenting information, planning guidance, care centers, agencies, and other available public and private resources for expectant families and new parents.

Whether it's private adoption agencies, country services, or crisis pregnancy centers, expectant women need an easy way to know what resources are available. No mother should ever have to feel alone. A woman with an unexpected pregnancy may be in fear of whether she can get support during pregnancy and after the child is born. The development and promotion of a Pregnancy and Parenting Resource Website will ensure that all public (state and local) and private resources are available on an easy-to-navigate website.

Are you aware of the location of the eight Pregnancy Resource Centers and Clinics in our state? They are in Dickinson, Devils Lake, Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Park River, and Williston. Do you know there are three adoption services in Fargo, including the Catholic Charities, the Village Family Service Center, and the Christian Adoption Services, with hundreds of willing parents waiting to adopt a child? This is just a sampling of resources available in the state.

North Dakota can provide compassionate care and life-giving support to assist mothers and their babies by simply providing a web portal with links to those resources and many more.

I urge you to vote "Do Pass."



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

103 South Third Street
Suite 10
Bismarck ND 58501
701-223-2519
ndcatholic.org
ndcatholic@ndcatholic.org

To: Senate Judiciary
From: Christopher Dodson, Executive Director
Subject: SB 2185 - Pregnancy and Parenting Resource Website
Date: January 16, 2023

The North Dakota Catholic Conference supports Senate Bill 2185 to establish a pregnancy and parenting website.

Making North Dakota a sanctuary for life requires businesses, families, churches, charities, and the public sector to support pregnant women, children, and families. Many such efforts already exist and we can expect more.

There does not exist, however, a one-stop website where someone can find those resources. A list of participants in the Alternatives to Abortion program exists on the Department of Health and Human Services website, but it is outdated, hard to find, and incomplete.

A single, easy-to-navigate page that covers both private and government resources would address this problem. The resources could include links to health information, financial assistance, pregnancy centers, adoption agencies, and parenting resources.

For these reasons, the North Dakota Catholic Conference supports SB 2185 and asks for a "Do Pass" recommendation.

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Kim Mertz, Healthy and Safe Communities Section Director within the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (Department), Division of Public Health. I am here to provide information on Senate Bill 2185 regarding what the Department has already done relating to pregnancy and parenting resources being available on a website.

As part of North Dakota Century Code, Chapter 14-02.1, Abortion Control Act, Section 14-02.1-02.1, Printed information, Health and Human Services is required to provide "Geographically indexed materials designed to inform the woman of public and private agencies and services available to assist a woman through pregnancy, upon childbirth, and while the child is dependent, including adoption agencies. The materials must include a comprehensive list of agencies available, a description of the services they offer and a description of the manner, including telephone numbers, in which they might be contacted...."

To assure materials are kept up to date in a timely manner and to expand reach, the Department identified the need to transition from printed materials to an online resource directory. As a result, the Department contracted with FirstLink 2-1-1 in August 2020 to include the required information cited above into their Directory of Community Resources website: <https://myfirstlink.org/>. FirstLink promotes the website and resources through monthly website banners, social media posts and distribution of media materials.

Instead of developing a new site, as the current language proposes, we would suggest using the appropriation to enhance the existing FirstLink site. The use of the current website might save taxpayers' dollars. If this Bill passes in its current form, the appropriation of \$100,000 is more than likely not sufficient and the time frame of completion by August 1, 2023, is not achievable. The Department would be required to procure a new contract with an entity to

develop a new website, the entity would need time to do the work of developing the new website and the Department would need to secure advertising on billboards within a few months. We believe more time and resources would be needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.



Chairwoman Larson and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am here today to represent the interests and legislative initiatives of their base comprised of 3700 citizens across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there has been a rise in questions in what this means for pregnant women and families to find themselves pregnant in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protect life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that educates our citizens on resources available and encourages life. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their best option to achieve a successful, happy life. Legislation like SB 2185 is the future for helping those most vulnerable in our state.

This bill, if passed, would develop a pregnancy and parenting resource website that will educate and guide these expecting mothers and families as they navigate the benefits provided in North Dakota. ***The website will have links to social services, financial assistance, adoption services, pregnancy and parenting information, planning guidance, care centers and agencies, and other available public and private resources for expectant families and new parents.*** A resource like this website would be critical for groups like North Dakota Right to Life when directing those who reach out to use for assistance and guidance.

I ask this committee today for a ***Do Pass recommendation on SB 2185*** in order to solidify the values of North Dakotans as we continue to provide resources for those pregnant women and families to find themselves in crisis pregnancy.

Thank you for your time today and I will now stand for any questions that the committee may have.

Sincerely,

Sierra Heitkamp

Sierra Heitkamp

NDRL Legislative Director





NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 2185

Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
January 16, 2023

Good afternoon 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 Senate Bill 2185 and respectfully request that you render a "DO PASS" on this bill.

I come to you today not only on behalf of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action, but also on behalf of the young population of our state. As we all know, the internet is the biggest source of information for our young people by far. We go to the internet for all of our questions. "What temperature does chicken need to be cooked to?" "Can dogs eat bananas?" "Are dragons real?" But we also go to search out more serious topics, such as, "What should I do if I am pregnant?"

At North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action we believe that we, as a state which values life, should help answer that last question. Our state should provide a trustworthy and comprehensive resource of information for women who are pregnant and are not sure what to do, where to go, or how to get answers at a time when things can be uncertain and stressful. This website would include these crucial resources for expectant moms, families, and new parents.

Many other states have websites and resources like this: North Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, and South Dakota, to name a few. We believe that our state should do the same and should provide individuals and families with an incredibly important resource to help guide them and better equip them to navigate the journey that is pregnancy.

Senate Bill 2185 would provide a resource that helps expecting moms, families, and new parents navigate pregnancy. It would be a website that would play a crucial role in facilitating the gift of life. For this reason, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action asks that you please vote Senate Bill 2185 out of committee with a "DO PASS" recommendation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to stand for any questions.

1515 Burnt Boat Dr., Suite C-148, Bismarck, ND 58503
mark@ndfamilyalliance.org
701-355-6425
www.ndfamilyalliance.org

23.0521.02002

Sixty-eighth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

SENATE BILL NO. 2185

Introduced by

Senators Myrdal, Cleary, Wobbema

Representatives Louser, Weisz

1 A BILL for an Act to provide for an appropriation to the department of health and human
2 services for the development of a pregnancy and parenting resource website; and to declare an
3 emergency.

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

5 **SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES -**

6 **PREGNANCY AND PARENTING RESOURCE WEBSITE--ONE-TIME FUNDING.** There is
7 appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise
8 appropriated, the sum of \$100,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the
9 department of health and human services for the purpose of developing and maintaining a state
10 internet website that provides information and links to social services, financial assistance,
11 adoption services, pregnancy and parenting information, maternal and childbirth life services,
12 planning guidance, care centers and agencies, and other available public and private resources
13 for expectant families and new parents, for the period beginning with the effective date of this
14 Act, and ending June 30, 2025. The department shall contract with a third party for the
15 development of the website. The department shall promote and market the website by
16 publishing easily comprehensible printed materials and placing visible billboards in high-traffic
17 areas to inform expectant families and new parents about the website. The website must be
18 operational by August 1, 2023, and have the domain name life.nd.org or a similar domain name
19 if the specified domain name is not available. The website must be distinct from the
20 department's government website and the department shall place a clear and conspicuous link
21 to the website on the department's government website. ~~The funding provided in this section is~~
22 ~~considered a one-time funding item.~~

23 **SECTION 2. EMERGENCY.** This Act is declared to be an emergency measure.

CONCERNED
WOMEN *for* AMERICA
LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

March 14, 2023
House Human Services Committee
Testimony in Support of SB 2185

Chairman Robin Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Linda Thorson, State Director for Concerned Women for America (CWA) of North Dakota. Today, I am testifying for Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee in support of SB 2185.

As the largest public policy women's organization in the nation and our state, CWA of North Dakota strongly supports SB 2185. SB 2185 is a commonsense bill that would provide mothers with information and links to social services, financial assistance, adoption services, pregnancy and parenting information, planning guidance, care centers, agencies, and other available public and private resources for expectant families and new parents.

Whether it's private adoption agencies, county services, or crisis pregnancy centers, expectant women need an easy way to know what resources are available. No mother should ever have to feel alone. A woman with an unexpected pregnancy may be in fear of whether she can get support during pregnancy and after the child is born. The development and promotion of a Pregnancy and Parenting Resource Website will ensure that all public (state and local) and private resources are available on an easy-to-navigate website.

Are you aware of the location of the eight Pregnancy Resource Centers and Clinics in our state? They are in Dickinson, Devils Lake, Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Park River, and Williston. Do you know there are three adoption services in Fargo, including the Catholic Charities, the Village Family Service Center, and the Christian Adoption Services, with hundreds of willing parents waiting to adopt a child? This is just a sampling of resources available in the state.

North Dakota can provide compassionate care and life-giving support to assist mothers and their babies by simply providing a web portal with links to those resources and many more.

I urge you to vote "Do Pass."



2401 Bernadette Drive Columbia, MO 65203 | (573) 445-9295 | info@chooselifecoalition.com

March 14, 2023

To: Human Services Committee
From: Scott Baker, VP of Public Affairs
Re: SB 2185

Chairman Weisz and Members of the Human Services Committee,

The Choose Life Coalition works closely with pregnancy resource centers (PRCs) in every state, including North Dakota. We strongly urge passage of Senate Bill 2185.

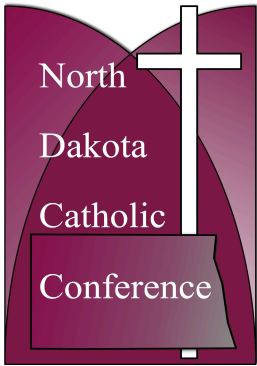
Women who go online seeking information about pregnancy resources and life-affirming options face a multitude of hurdles. Big Tech companies like Google, Facebook, Amazon, and others have committed to an uneven playing field when it comes to exposing pro-life options to pregnant women. Search results are manipulated, and advertisement policies are inconsistently applied when compared to abortion advocates and providers.

This impacts not only the women seeking information, but the PRCs and adoption agencies that are trying to reach her where she is and when she needs them the most. There are countless examples of this type of online manipulation. We work with companies like Google every day to ensure that pro-life groups and interests are fairly represented online.

All of this is applicable regardless of local laws. Pro-abortion interests target women in States like North Dakota. They seek to create confusion and a lack of trustworthy information online. This is why it is imperative to have an effective, modern resource committed to clearly showing the local, life-affirming options available to women. Including information about social services, financial assistance, adoption services, and other important help just makes good sense.

As an organization who creates these types of online resources in other states, we can confidently say that this website can be online by August 1 of this year. One of the challenges we have seen for similar resources around the country is a lack of awareness of the tool once it is implemented. We support the effort to invest additional funds in the ongoing promotion of this important tool.

For these reasons we encourage a "Do Pass" recommendation from the committee.



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

103 South Third Street
Suite 10
Bismarck ND 58501
701-223-2519
ndcatholic.org
ndcatholic@ndcatholic.org

To: House Human Services
From: Christopher Dodson, Executive Director
Subject: SB 2185 - Pregnancy and Parenting Resource Website
Date: March 14, 2023

The North Dakota Catholic Conference supports Senate Bill 2185 to establish a pregnancy and parenting website.

Making North Dakota a sanctuary for life requires businesses, families, churches, charities, and the public sector to support pregnant women, children, and families. Many such efforts already exist and we can expect more.

There does not exist, however, a one-stop website where someone can find those resources. A list of participants in the Alternatives to Abortion program exists on the Department of Health and Human Services website, but it is outdated, hard to find, and incomplete.

A single, easy-to-navigate page that covers both private and government resources would address this problem. The resources could include links to health information, financial assistance, pregnancy centers, adoption agencies, and parenting resources.

For these reasons, the North Dakota Catholic Conference supports SB 2185 and asks for a "Do Pass" recommendation.



Chairman Robin Weisz and Members of the House Human Services Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am here today to represent the interests and legislative initiatives of their base comprised of 3700 citizens across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there has been a rise in questions in what this means for pregnant women and families to find themselves pregnant in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protect life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that provides opportunity to our citizens on resources available regarding life in our state as well as encourages life. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their best option to achieve a successful, happy life. Legislation like SB 2185 is the future for helping those most vulnerable in our state.

This bill, if passed, would develop a pregnancy and parenting resource website that will educate and guide these expecting mothers and families as they navigate the benefits provided in North Dakota. ***The website will have links to social services, financial assistance, adoption services, pregnancy and parenting information, planning guidance, care centers and agencies, and other available public and private resources for expectant families and new parents.*** A resource like this website would be critical for groups like North Dakota Right to Life when directing those who reach out to us for assistance and guidance.

I ask this committee today for a ***Do Pass recommendation on SB 2185*** in order to solidify the values of North Dakotans as we continue to provide resources for those pregnant women and families to find themselves in crisis pregnancy.

Thank you for your time today and I will now stand for any questions that the committee may have.

Sincerely,

Sierra M Heitkamp

Sierra M Heitkamp
NDRL Legislative Director

