

Testimony
Department Of Human Services
Judicial Process Committee
Representative Shirley Meyer, Chairman
September 17, 2009

Chairman Meyer, members of the Judicial Process Committee, I am Mike Schwindt, Director of the award winning Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program in the Department of Human Services. I am here to provide information about the Child Support program, our customers, and our methods of providing service as well what we see as potential areas for improving services.

The bulk of my testimony will be in Power Point with supplemental handouts that will be referenced as we proceed.

The testimony will touch on a number of areas:

- Program purpose and structure
- Federal and state laws/requirements
- Customers
- Our program structure
 - IV-D customers
 - nonIV-D customers
 - the SDU
- Services we provide to
 - IV-D customers
 - nonIV-D customers
- Tools we use
- Collections and receivables
 - the SDU
- Benefits to customers and taxpayers

- Performance measures
- Services we do not provide
 - visitation
 - legal representation to either parent

With the past as prologue, we look to the future for improving services. We have historically managed one of the better child support programs in the country, particularly when compared to our peers.

We have ranked in the top three programs nationally since 2003 according to the federal performance measures.

- Our program – involving the CSE staff, the clerks of court and the courts – was recognized as the outstanding program by
 - Western Interstate Child Support Enforcement Council in 2006, and
 - National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA) in 2008.
- We also received innovation awards from
 - the Council of State Governments in 2007 for our PRIDE (Parental Responsibility Initiative in the Development of Employment) program which involved TANF and JSND.
 - the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) Commissioner
 - in 2007 for PRIDE
 - in 2008 for the Multi-program Collaboration Project and the National Judicial Child Support Task Force.
- A number of our staff have been recognized in 2008 and 2009 including
 - the Family Support Conference’s
 - Program Awareness – Martha Bjorgaard and Jim Fleming

- Outstanding Individual - Mary Jo Nordine and Mike Schwindt
- NCSEA's Outstanding Manager and
- OCSE's Exemplary Leadership awards.

We do see room for significant improvement when we look to where we believe we can be. Our goal is to reach world class performance. To achieve this performance level, we developed our Roadmap to the Future.

In developing our Roadmap we benchmarked world class as **... when children, parents, and taxpayers can, with a very high degree of confidence, rely on our services to assist in the orderly transfer of resources between parents while also encouraging positive relationships between children and parents. In every contact, customers are treated with respect. In every program decision, the best interests of children are paramount.**

Some of the measurements showing progress will be relatively easy; others will be much more difficult to assess. Most activities will be ongoing into the future.

Madame Chairman, this concludes our testimony. I'd be happy to address questions.