

Testimony
Senate Bill 2381 – Department of Human Services
Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Ray Holmberg
February 12, 2009

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, my name is Linda Rorman, and I am the Head Start-State Collaboration Office Administrator in the Children and Family Services Division of the Department of Human Services. I am here today to answer any questions you may have regarding the Head Start–State Collaboration Office and to provide you with an overview of this office.

The Head Start-State Collaboration office is funded as a supplemental Federal grant project since 1996 and was awarded a five year grant of \$500,000. The Department of Human Services was selected to serve as lead agency and grants administrator because of their proven record in serving children and families across systems and also because of continued strong working relationships with the North Dakota Head Start Association and other private and public partnerships.

The Head Start-State Collaboration office could be used to administer grant awards for state funded Head Start slots to serve additional children and families with low-income and to expand services to children most at risk and for children and families without homes. The state funded Head Start programs would comply with the Federal mandated Head Start Performance Standards and the requirements cited in Federal statute P.L. 110-134 - Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 signed by President Bush on December 12, 2007.

The Head Start-State Collaboration office would develop an RFP (Request for Proposals) process with selection criteria outlined in Senate Bill 2381. Only existing Head Start grantees with excellent audit records and passing Federal triennial reviews would be eligible. The Federal Region VIII Office of Head Start has offered to collaborate in joint efforts to ensure exemplary practices by including the state funded programs in the Federal reviews providing a cost savings to the state. Another cost savings to the State would be to enable the state funded program staff/parents/volunteers to be beneficiaries of the Federal Training and Technical Assistance Network across the state.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.