

Testimony
Senate Bill 2381 – Department of Human Services
Senate Education Committee
Senator Layton Freborg
February 2, 2009

Chairman Freborg, members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Linda Rorman, and I am the Head Start State Collaboration Office Administrator in the Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services Division. I am here today to provide you an overview of the North Dakota Head Start-State Collaboration Office and to explain the program granting criteria as provided in Senate Bill 2381.

The Head Start-State Collaboration office was funded as a supplemental Federal grant project since 1996 and was awarded a five year grant of \$500,000.00. 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.

Although Head Start is a Federal to local program, the national Office of Head Start recognizes the importance and role of State in policies, initiatives and decisions that affect children and families with low-incomes. The Head Start-State Collaboration office's overall goals are intended to:

1. Assist in building early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services and support for all low-income children;
2. Encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start and other programs and services (including health care, welfare, child care,

education, family literacy, community services, services to children with disabilities, and children without homes) and;

3. Facilitate the involvement of Head Start in State policies, plans, processes, and initiatives affecting the Head Start and Early Head Start target population and other families with low-income.

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. The state funded Head Start programs would follow the federally 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 12th, 2007.

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