

Testimony
House Bill 1105 - Department of Human Services
House Human Services
Representative Robin Weisz, Chairman

January 9, 2019

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Pamela Sagness, Director of the Behavioral Health Division of the Department of Human Services (Department). I appear today to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1105.

House Bill 1105, Section 1, addresses a change to North's Dakota's voluntary treatment program (VTP). North Dakota Century Code section 50-06-06.13 established the voluntary treatment program which currently provides out-of-home treatment services for Medicaid-eligible children with a serious emotional disorder without requiring parents to relinquish custody (N.D.C.C. § 50-06-06.13). House Bill 1105 expands the purpose of this program to allow for preventing out-of-home placement for a Medicaid-eligible child with a behavioral health condition. In an effort to utilize the least restrictive environment necessary and in order to keep families intact, the Department is asking for the ability to support children not only with "out of home" placement but, when appropriate, to offer reimbursement for services that maintain a child in their home.

This expansion of the voluntary treatment program has the potential to address Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) recommendations #3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11,12, and 13.

House Bill 1105, Section 2, provides language changes to section 50-06-42 of the North Dakota Century Code to allow public programs with a substance use disorder treatment program license, excluding the regional human service centers, to apply as a substance use disorder voucher provider. This change would provide the

opportunity for local public health programs and tribes to participate in the voucher program.

This expansion of eligible providers for the substance use disorder voucher program has the potential to address Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) recommendations #3, 4, 9, 10, 11,12, and 13.

This concludes my testimony, and I am happy to answer any questions.