

Testimony
Senate Bill 2066 – Department of Human Services
Senate Human Services Committee
Senator Lee, Chairman
January 8, 2007

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Paul Ronningen, Director, Children and Family Services with the Department of Human Services. I am here today to present testimony regarding Senate Bill 2066. The Department supports the passage of this bill.

This bill was introduced to eliminate the sunset clause on the moratorium placed on the expansion of residential bed capacity, which was set at the number of beds licensed as of June 30, 2003. Thus, the moratoria would continue and would not be re-examined during the 2009 Legislative Session unless some issue was identified. (See [Attachment A](#) for a listing of the current Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF), formerly know as Residential Treatment Centers and [Attachment B](#) for a listing of the current Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCF) and their licensed bed capacity.)

The moratoriums were originally passed by the 2001 Legislative Assembly. The moratoria were primarily due to the facility in Mandan, Southwest Keys, who operated in North Dakota from 11/10/97 through 6/30/2000 and provided 40 RCCF and RTC beds. They vacated these beds with a month's notice and left agencies, families and children scrambling for alternative service locations.

In order to address the service needs of some youth who are leaving the state for residential treatment services, the North Dakota Department of

Human Services has issued a RFP (Request for Proposals) for treatment services for adolescent sexual offenders. The deadline for responding to this request is February 28, 2007. As of November 2006, there are 51 youth in residential treatment services.

I have also attached a chart titled Child Welfare Data Snapshot ([Attachment C](#)), which illustrates the trend line for foster care placements in the state of North Dakota. The chart shows that foster care placements have increased overall by 11.7% since FFY (Federal Fiscal Year) 2000. However, the percentage of youth placed in residential care has dropped by 11.6% while the number of children placed with their extended families has gone up by 140.1%.

This concludes my formal presentation.