

**Testimony**  
**House Bill 1115 – Department of Human Services**  
**House Judiciary Committee**  
**Representative Duane DeKrey, Chair**  
**January 12, 2011**

Chairman DeKrey, members of the House Judiciary Committee, my name is Dean Sturn, and I am the Foster Care Administrator for the Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services Division. I am here today to provide you an overview and explanation relating to the confidentiality of all foster care records as provided in House Bill 1115, as amended. The Department supports passage of this bill.

Since the introduction of HB 1115, conversations have taken place with the Attorney General's Office as to what part of North Dakota Century Code will most effectively encompass the confidentiality of all foster care records. Those conversations have resulted in the attached agreed upon amendment. The attached amendment maintains the spirit of the introduced legislation, but places the language in a different chapter of North Dakota Century Code.

House Bill 1115, as amended, clarifies that all North Dakota foster care records are confidential records. Section 50-11-05 of North Dakota Century Code already addresses the confidentiality of information contained in records of licensed facilities, but is not specific to foster care records of the Department and its authorized agents. By adding language specific to foster care records of the Department and its authorized agents, rules governing requests for the release of information contained within all foster care records will be clearly stated in law.

If passed, House Bill 1115, as amended, would ensure that information contained within all foster care records is treated as confidential.

This concludes my testimony, thank you for your support of this amended bill. I would be happy to answer any questions.