

Good morning Madam Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee. My name is Kim Mertz and I am the Healthy and Safe Communities Section Chief and the State Maternal and Child Health Director for the North Dakota Department of Health. I am here today to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1285.

I am providing written testimony from Mylynn Tufte, the State Health Officer for the North Dakota Department of Health. In her written testimony, Mylynn shares her personal story of being an abandoned infant and the gratitude she has for her birth family for giving her a better life.

The North Dakota Department of Health's mission is to improve the length and quality of life for all North Dakotans. Implementing policies, practices and strategies designed to provide for the health and safety of infants are important and critical approaches to help achieve this mission.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.