



# ND Women's Voice

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

FALL 2014

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## From the Director's Desk



2014 has been a transformative year for the North Dakota Women's Network (NDWN). At the start of the year, we were on a shoestring budget and skeleton staff. We knew there was an immense amount of work to be done, but uncertain in how we could move our mission forward strategically. With some introspection and key investments from allies, our direction and support became crystal clear. Nine months later, NDWN is the strongest we've ever been. We have new staff, new projects, and new allies.

Over the past year we

have been an active member in **North Dakotans Against Measure 1 (NDAM1)** and are looking forward to seeing Measure 1 defeated on the November ballot. Of course, that defeat won't happen without a lot of effort and support. I urge all of you to go to <http://ndam1.org> to get involved and learn more about the campaign.

We are also excited to be a founding member of **FUSE: A Force to end hUman Sexual Exploitation**. As sex trafficking is surging in North Dakota, NDWN came together with CAWS North Dakota, First Nation Women's Alliance, National Association of Social Workers – ND, and Prevent Child Abuse ND. After lengthy discussions and planning, we collectively formed FUSE,

received a generous grant from the Bush Foundation, and are moving forward to solve the problem of human trafficking in North Dakota.

Finally, we continue to look for long term programs to improve women's lives. With many collaborative partners, we analyze how to make marked improvements to women's economic justice. **When women's economic status is improved, children do better, families do better, and communities do better.**

We will continue to work to create a just and equitable society in North Dakota by defending our rights and pursuing policy solutions that work for everyone in the areas of reproductive rights, economic justice, personal safety, education, and so much more.

## Member's Corner: Featuring Caitlin McDonald

*The Member's Corner was created for you to become acquainted with a fellow member of the Women's Network. Say "hello" to this issue's featured member and new staffer...Caitlin McDonald*

Hello!! I am absolutely thrilled to be joining the staff here at the North Dakota Women's Network.

Last year, I got together with a group of women for the We Will Remember Your Vote project. Through that project, I became involved in the fight against Measure 1. When a position opened up at the Network, I couldn't submit my resume fast enough!

In addition to reproductive rights, I am

particularly passionate about ending violence against women. Prior to joining the NDWN, I worked at CAWS ND and later, I became a rape crisis advocate at the Abused Adult Resource Center. My experiences with victims of sexual assault and domestic violence made it clear to me that laws and policies play a huge role in how survivors navigate their experiences and how we as a society view those crimes.

We need to work to implement policies that treat women as whole people, not the subjects of political and religious debates. Women's lives and experiences matter, that's the bottom line. I am dedicated to

this work, I am excited every day to do my part in this fight, and I do have hope that we can see a more peaceful world with more women's voices at the table. I am reminded of this attitude of hopeful fighting every day by a quote that hangs on my mirror...

"So I love with one hand, and fight with the other. In some of my dreams, though, I love with both hands and the fighting is over." —Anonymous



# Measure 1: Introduction to the Law

By **Steven R. Morrison**

Measure 1 will be on the ballot this November. It reads, “The inalienable right to life of every human being at any stage of development must be recognized and protected.” If it passes by a majority vote, it will become part of the North Dakota Constitution.

The proponents of Measure 1 make two major, and mutually exclusive, claims. First, they argue that Measure 1 will prevent out-of-state pro-choice groups from litigating in North Dakota courts, stand as a strong statement that North Dakota is against abortion, and produce a legal challenge to *Roe v. Wade*. Second, proponents argue that we have nothing to worry about because Measure 1 will have no legal effect. They are wrong on both counts, and there is a lot they are not saying.

Measure 1 will not prevent parties, wherever they are, to sue in North Dakota courts, nor will it present an obvious or direct threat to *Roe v. Wade*. The federal constitution provides for the right an abortion, and this right trumps state law to the contrary.

Measure 1 will probably, however, produce a number of legal problems. I say “probably” because the amendment’s language is so vague and broad that its effects are uncertain and will be determined by courts on a case-by-case basis. Voters should be most concerned with this vagueness. The best law is



**North Dakotans**  
Against Measure 1 • NDAM1.org

nuanced, predictable, and addresses defined social problems without undermining functioning parts of the system.

A good law is like a good cancer doctor: she excises the tumor only, leaving healthy cells and tissue alone. Measure 1 is not such a law. If it were a cancer doctor, it would treat early stage liver cancer by removing the entire organ.

Although it is impossible to say exactly how Measure 1 would be interpreted, some things are likely. First, it requires the government to act to “protect” life from its beginning to its very end. The North Dakota legislative assembly has determined that life ends when someone suffers irreversible cardiac or brain functioning. The legislature has not, however, determined when life begins. While proponents of Measure 1 generally argue that life begins at conception, that question remains undetermined in the law.

Measure 1 threatens a panoply of medical treatments and legal benefits. The validity of living wills and do no resuscitate orders is in question; in vitro fertilization may be stopped (IVF doctors are already

planning to cease their practice if Measure 1 passes); the state and taxpayers may be required to expend exorbitant amounts to maintain extraordinary life support for people who cannot afford it; the state may force patients to undergo treatment they do not want (for example, a Florida woman now faces prosecution if she fails to consent to a c-section birth); treatment for ectopic pregnancy may be outlawed; pregnant women may be forced to remain in the state if a putative father wins in court; and much more.

Imagine all of the decisions you make that could threaten or shorten life: smoking, drinking, letting your child play outside after dark; not exercising; refusing medical treatment. Measure 1 could insert the state into all of these decisions.

Legislators’ opposition to abortion is driving Measure 1, but it is about so much more than that. Whether you are in favor of or against the right to choose, Measure 1 is a gamble that guarantees no payout and a lot of harm. Vote No.



*The author is an assistant professor of law at the University of North Dakota School of Law, where he teaches constitutional law and criminal law. The views expressed herein are his alone and are not necessarily those of UND or the Law School.*

# Contacting our North Dakota Senators and Representative



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Our delegates have offices in multiple locations, improving the access for constituents. When you reach out to any of them, you will first speak with their staff. Most often, that is the most reasonable approach. For example, if you want to let the Senators or Representative know your preference on a particular piece of legislation, calling the office and voicing your opinion through a staff member is quite effective. The staff will record the information and pass it along to the office holder. There is no need to have detailed talking points for this call. Your call can be as simple as "I would like him to vote no" with perhaps a small mention of the reason: the bill disregards the needs of women, etc. In a few weeks you will receive a follow up letter from the Senator or Representative sharing his perspective on the issue.

As a constituent you can also request an audience with a Congressman. Because of their busy schedules, it is important to be prepared and concise in your discussions. These meetings require more preparation and details. Meeting with the office holder can be the most influential form of contact, followed by postal letters, then calls and finally email. If you mail a letter to the Washington office, it will take a good length of time to get to him due to the mail sorting process in DC, so plan accordingly.

Being an active participant in the legislative process is really quite simple and effective. Go out there and let your voice be heard. That is how we collectively improve the lives of women.

# There is Hunger in North Dakota

By Karen K. Ehrens, RD, LRD  
Coordinator of the Creating a Hunger Free North Dakota Coalition



These days, when people talk about North Dakota, many of the words we hear are “jobs, prosperity, and Bakken.” What doesn’t get mentioned so often is hunger, or not being secure in knowing if there will be enough food at your next meal. But for 21,000 children in North Dakota, that is a question that they or their families face at times during the year.

Around 14 percent of children from birth to age 18 years live in families in North Dakota that are “food insecure,” a term used by researchers to define what is more commonly talked about as “hunger.” While some of the lowest food insecurity rates in the nation are in North Dakota counties, in others, more than 1 in 4

children do not have enough food every day for a healthy and active lifestyle.

But, there is a group of people and organizations who share the vision of a hunger-free North Dakota, and are actively working to make the vision a reality. This statewide network is the *Creating a Hunger Free North Dakota Coalition* and includes anti-poverty, nutrition, social service, health, food providers, food pantries, food bank and other organizations including the ND Women’s Network.



September is recognized as *Hunger Action Month*. During September and throughout the year, consider these actions that any of us can take to reduce hunger.

- As you harvest from your garden and you have more squash than you can eat or more apples than you can make into apple crisp, share with your local food pantry. A list of pantries is at: <http://www.nd.gov/ndda/files/resource/HungerFreeNDGarden2014ParticipantList.pdf>
- Be aware of what is in your refrigerator and work to reduce food waste; in the U.S., up to 40% of our food is thrown away.
- Teach your children how to cook and garden, so they have the skills to be self-sufficient.
- Vote for candidates who support hunger relief and other programs that help people with low incomes build assets.

**Data Sourced From**  
Kids Count Data Center  
USDA Economic Research Service  
Feed America

# Are You Familiar With the New Voter ID Law?

State law has required that a voter provide ID to vote in elections since 2004. However, the legislature has changed the definition of a valid ID over the years. The most recent change was made during the last legislative session.

There are now five approved forms of identification: ND Driver’s License; ND Non-driver’s ID; Tribal Issued ID; Student ID Certificate; and Long Term Care ID Certificate.

In all cases, the ID must include the voter’s name, current residential address (no PO Boxes), and date of birth. Some IDs issued by tribal governments do not include all the required information, so it is important for voters to check the ID prior to attempting to use it for voting.

Absentee and mail-in voters are required to write down their ID number on their application or if using a Student or Long



Term Care ID Certificate, include a copy of the certificate with their ballot application. Those voting in person on Election Day or at an early voting location will show or provide their ID to the poll workers.

The North Dakota Secretary of State’s office has a section of its website specifically dedicated to helping residents understand voting requirements. [Vote.ND.gov](http://Vote.ND.gov) includes information about voting and ID, tools for finding your polling place, viewing your sample ballot, viewing instructional videos, and a link to

update your address information with the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT).

Voters can change their address online at [Vote.ND.gov](http://Vote.ND.gov) through the NDDOT Address Change Utility, which will then update the voter’s record in the Central Voter File or by visiting a driver’s license bureau. If the address is updated online, the pollbook will contain the updated address even though the voter’s driver’s license or non-driver’s ID does not since the address was updated in the Central Voter File. **You MUST update your address by October 5<sup>th</sup> to be eligible to vote in the November 4<sup>th</sup> election.**

Anyone with election questions is encouraged to call their county auditor’s office or go to [Vote.ND.gov](http://Vote.ND.gov) or call the Elections Unit of the Secretary of State’s office at 1-800-352-0867, option 6.

# Force to end hUman Sexual Exploitation (FUSE)

By Christina Sambor



Anyone regularly tuning into the news in North Dakota communities is undoubtedly aware that the commercial sexual exploitation of vulnerable populations is sadly thriving in our state. It is not solely an “oil patch” problem, but its spike within North Dakota is undoubtedly fueled by recent years’ economic and population boom. Many different government agencies and non-profit organizations have felt increasing urgency and pressure to understand and to react to the sex trafficking boom in our state.

The North Dakota Women’s Network, CAWS North Dakota, the First Nations’ Women’s Alliance, Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota, and the ND Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers collectively responded to the call to action by forming FUSE -

a Force to End Human Sexual Exploitation. FUSE is the statewide anti-trafficking coalition in North Dakota. FUSE is a space for advocates, direct service providers, law enforcement, and allied partners who are seeking to develop and implement a coordinated, comprehensive response to the sex trafficking crisis in North Dakota.



Our hope, as FUSE, is to grow the coalition to include these stakeholders, consulting with those on the front lines of this battle, and to facilitate communication, coordination and implementation of research-based best practices in the field of anti-trafficking work. We will also seek to educate the public on the warning signs of trafficking, and the disturbing reality of its presence in our state. We hope to engage the

citizens of North Dakota in our efforts to identify victims and perpetrators of human trafficking, so that through collective attention and vigilance, we can end this scourge.

The victimization of North Dakota residents, and those brought to our state for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation is an emergency, and demands our best efforts to remedy these human rights abuses. We, as FUSE, will continue to reach out in upcoming months as we continue to develop our plan and membership, and encourage you to stay tuned, stay informed and get involved in the fight against human trafficking in North Dakota.

For more information on FUSE, please contact Christina Sambor, Coordinator, at [christina@projectfuse.org](mailto:christina@projectfuse.org)



## North Dakota Women's Network Annual Meeting and Woman of the Year Celebration! September 20, 2014

*Membership Meeting & Workshop, 1-5pm*  
*Human Trafficking in North Dakota—\$20 Registration Fee*  
*Hampton Inn, 2020 Schafer Street*  
*Bismarck, ND*

*Celebration of Representative Kylie Oversen, 7-9pm*  
*\$40 Registration Fee*  
*Brazillian Harvest Grill, 308 W Main Street*  
*Mandan, ND*

**Attend Both Events for \$50**

Learn More and Register at our website [www.ndwomen.org](http://www.ndwomen.org)

### NDWN Woman of the Year Rep. Kylie Oversen!

The North Dakota Women's Voice is made possible through the support of the Women's Equality Center, the S.L. Gimbel Foundation, the National Institute for Reproductive Health, generous donors and member support.

The North Dakota Women's Network is proud to announce our 2014 Woman of the Year, Representative Kylie Oversen.

Representative Oversen, a Killdeer native, has an impressive record of community service. She served as Student Body President while an undergraduate at UND, where she where she was an advocate for over 14,000 students at the campus, community, and state level. During her presidency, she and her team worked extensively on improving the student fee allocation process at UND and advocated for underrepresented and disadvantaged student populations.



In 2012, Representative Oversen became the youngest female legislator in the country when she was elected to serve District 42 in Grand Forks. Representative Oversen has been a strong voice for women and families in North Dakota, and in her first legislative session, she introduced legislation to address the growing concern about college tuition rates. In addition to her service in the

legislature, Representative Oversen currently attends law school at UND and serves on the Board of Directors for Red River Valley Habitat for Humanity and the Board of Directors for the ND Area Health Education Centers.

Erin Oban, in her nomination of Kylie, said, "Kylie is a champion. She's a smart, articulate, inquisitive, unassuming, strong, fearless woman. She respects opinions that may not equal hers, but she never backs down from a challenge or a cause or fighting for what's right, and she does it all with absolute grace." We couldn't agree more.

**Congratulations!!**

# Seeking Prosperity for All North Dakotans

By Rose Stoller



## North Dakota Economic Security and Prosperity Alliance

With initial support from the Seattle Foundation, Strategies to Eliminate Poverty (STEP) program, the North Dakota Economic Security & Prosperity Alliance (NDESPA) was formed in 2008. NDESPA began as a coalition of advocates with an early purpose of promoting passage of a state earned income tax credit (EITC) in North Dakota. Although the legislation ultimately failed, the coalition continues its work, in an even broader scope exemplified by the vision and mission statements:

**NDESPA Vision Statement:**

With the help of supportive policy makers and communities, all North Dakotans will have the tools they need to achieve and maintain economic security for themselves and their families.

**NDESPA Mission Statement:**

The ND Economic Security and Prosperity Alliance works to build and sustain a system of economic security for all through poverty awareness and education, grassroots and community capacity building, research and data development and promotion of policies and

practices to eliminate disparities and obstacles for achieving economic security.

Since originally forming, NDESPA has maintained work in the following key areas of education, outreach and advocacy:

- Coalition-based communication, coordination and planning activities: to provide/ convene meetings, conference calls and electronic organization and to reach a greater audience of allies and advocates through social and other media.
- Public Education and advocacy: to remain in contact with legislative champions, to draft model legislation, assist with press releases and conferences, to provide testimony during the legislative session and at interim committee hearings, to gain greater legislative support/ momentum and to make individual contacts with district legislators; to inform policy makers and the public about the

benefits of poverty reduction efforts; to convene statewide and regional community meetings to provide policy information and assess community needs and to convene an annual summit.

- Coalition-building: to increase the diversity and reach of the coalition and to provide feedback to constituencies to build the coalition into the future.
- Technical assistance: through national partners including Public Works, CFED and the Hatcher Group, NDESPA receives technical assistance and support that can then be provided to local, regional and state asset building efforts; NDESPA is the Lead State Organization (LSO) for the Assets & Opportunities Scorecard.



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**Return Service Requested**

**As leaders, the North Dakota Women's Network will serve as the catalyst for improving the lives of women through communication, legislation and increased public activism.**

## NDWN Membership Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Individual membership:**

- \$10 Student Membership
- \$30 Standard Individual Membership
- \$31-\$199 MOVER Level Membership
- \$200-\$499 SHAKER Level Membership
- \$500+ EQUALITY MAKER Level Membership
- A financial contribution isn't possible at this time but count me as a member.

**Organization membership (based on operating budget):**

- \$100 for a budget under \$100,000
- \$150 for a budget between \$100,000 and \$500,000
- \$200 for a budget over \$500,000

Your membership contribution to NDWN:       \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional donation to NDWN:                 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total enclosed:                                     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*I support the mission of the North Dakota Women's Network and commit to the common purposes of NDWN to achieve full equality for women.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to **North Dakota Women's Network**. Memberships are requested on an annual basis. Send to:  
 North Dakota Women's Network  
 1120 College Dr, Suite 100  
 Bismarck, ND 58501