

Fifty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

REENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2349

Introduced by

Senators Mathern, Erbele, Heitkamp

Representatives Kaldor, Kerzman, Wald

1 A BILL for an Act to provide for an office of faith-based and community initiatives and an
2 advisory commission on faith-based and community initiatives.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. Office of faith-based and community initiatives established.** The
5 office of faith-based and community initiatives is established within the governor's office. The
6 office of faith-based and community initiatives has lead responsibility to establish policies,
7 priorities, and objectives for the state's comprehensive effort to enlist, equip, enable, empower,
8 and expand the work of faith-based and community organizations to the extent permitted by
9 law. The governor shall designate a member of the governor's staff to serve as director of the
10 office of faith-based and community initiatives. The governor may designate other members of
11 the governor's staff to assist the director.

12 **SECTION 2. Functions.** The principal functions of the office of faith-based and
13 community initiatives are to:

- 14 1. Develop, lead, and coordinate the state's policy agenda affecting faith-based and
15 community programs and initiatives; expand the role of those efforts in
16 communities; and increase their capacity through executive action, legislation,
17 federal and private funding, and regulatory relief;
- 18 2. Coordinate public education activities designed to mobilize public support for
19 faith-based and community initiatives through volunteerism, special projects,
20 demonstration pilots, and public and private partnerships;
- 21 3. Encourage private charitable giving to support faith-based and community
22 initiatives;

4. Bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the governor and legislative assembly for assisting, strengthening, and replicating successful faith-based and community programs;
5. Provide policy and legal education to state, local, and community policymakers and public officials seeking ways to empower faith-based and community organizations and to improve the opportunities, capacity, and expertise of those groups;
6. Develop and implement strategic initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society and the state's families and communities;
7. Encourage innovative grassroots, nonprofit organizations, and civic initiatives; and
8. Ensure that the efforts of faith-based and community organizations meet high standards of excellence and accountability.

SECTION 3. Advisory commission. The advisory commission on faith-based and community initiatives is composed of seven members to include the following: the executive director of the department of human services or the director's designee; the director of the department of corrections and rehabilitation or the director's designee; two members of the legislative assembly, one of whom must be selected by the members of the legislative council representing the majority faction and one of whom must be selected by the members of the legislative council representing the minority faction; and three public members appointed by the governor, one of whom must represent a minority population. The term of office for the public members is three years. Of the first public members appointed, one must be appointed for a term of one year, one must be appointed for a term of two years, and one must be appointed for a term of three years. No public member may be appointed to more than two consecutive terms. A chairman of the commission must be chosen annually from the membership of the commission by a majority of its members at the first meeting of the advisory commission each year. The advisory commission shall advise the director of the office of faith-based and community initiatives and the governor in the establishment of policy regarding matters affecting the faith-based and community organizations, including making recommendations to the governor concerning the future of existing state programs and initiatives. The advisory commission on faith-based and community initiatives shall report periodically to the governor and provide the governor with information and recommendations for the governor's

- 1 consideration. The members of the advisory commission are entitled to mileage and expenses
- 2 as provided by law for state officers and employees.