

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Testimony on Senate Bill 2224

January 28th, 2025

Submitted by Janelle Mitzel, Development Homes, Inc.

Madam Chairperson Larson & Committee Members,

Thank you for your consideration of a **Do Not Pass** on SB 2224. This bill removes the governor from the commission process and eliminates the checks and balances within the executive branch.

Development Homes, Inc:

- DHI is a non-profit organization in Grand Forks providing community-based support services to persons with disabilities from all over ND.
- DHI has residential services including seven group homes, two duplex facilities, a multi-unit autism living center, two transitional living centers and multiple independent living settings.
- DHI provides vocational services including job training and placement, and family services including respite care and in-home support.
- DHI serves approximately two hundred individuals from children to adults, serving through all stages of life.
- DHI is currently the 12th largest employer in Grand Forks, employing 450 to 500 people. Our economic footprint is vital to this community.

This bill eliminates the ND gaming commission and authorizes all regulatory functions and enforcement of the charitable gaming industry solely to the Office of AG. North Dakota has a proud history of government transparency, active participation in the regulatory process and the ability of citizens to weigh in on industry standards and regulation. Abolishing the commission will result in an unbalanced regulatory system.

Development Homes Gaming Revenue Uses:

- Provides financial funds necessary to supplement new projects, such as bricks & mortar. The \$900,000 DHI autism living center was funded through HUD with matching grants from DHI charitable gaming.
- Job creation, training, and employment through DHI business opportunities catering to the skills of individuals supported.
- Specialized adaptive equipment & urgent/crisis care needs for persons served.
- Funding of wages and benefits to stabilize and sustain needed workforce.
- Basic care needs, such as eyeglasses, shoes, and clothing, especially for our children served with their continued growth and ever-changing needs.
- Specialized training for professional staff including nurses, social workers, and expert management.
- Grants to ND communities funding local needs, including police equipment, literacy adaptive equipment and software, drug & alcohol prevention, substance abuse and mental health professional facilitators, daycare facility equipment, and promotion of local community events to name a few.
- Sustainability and support of long-term projects to meet community needs.

DHI provides imperative services in our community. Charitable gaming is particularly important to this organization as those dollars are used to sustain our mission. DHI would appreciate a **Do Not Pass** recommendation on this bill.