

Date: 1/22/2021

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

I was scared to death. I couldn't remember things. I missed appointments they tested me for dementia. Then I had testing and they said you have a brain injury.

Since learning about my brain injury life is:

I wake up and it is scary. Knowing is helpful. I am learning new things. It is scary, but at least I know.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network is important to me because:

I love them. Without them I would be lost. I am starting to feel better. I am feeling human not like a piece.

I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know

this about brain injury: We think different.

We are the same but completely different we need different services than typical brain injuries.

Sincerely,

1/22/2021  
Maureen E Spath

Date: 1/22/2021

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

good. I had a full time job, I did not have pain, confusion, or other symptoms of a TBI. After my TBI, I was mis-diagnosed.

Since learning about my brain injury life is:

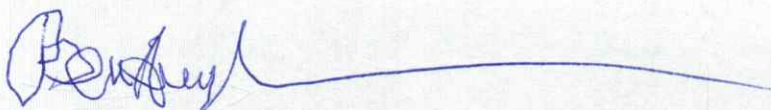
After my brain injury, I feel miserable because of my mis-diagnosis and constantly being in pain. I also feel fatigue much of the time.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network is important to me because:

I can have an agency like NIIM to help me with things like doing my paperwork, going to doctor appointments and advocating for me. Sometimes when I go to the doctor they don't listen to me.  
I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know this about brain injury:

The care people with brain injuries need is different than mental health care.

Sincerely,



Date: 1-22-21

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

A struggle, not knowing why I felt different and out of place. Upset more often than not. Trusting is hard. Taking responsibility for my self was Hard.

Since learning about my brain injury life is:

I still struggle but now I have some sense of self worth, and hope. Life is not all Bad. I feel better about choices I make.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network is important to me because: the help I get is worked at my needs and pace. Because N.D.B.I.N. ~~is~~ offers me help I did not know was out there.

I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know this about brain injury:

That no person is the same as a nother.  
So ~~the~~ progress is never the same as a nother.

Sincerely, Bruce Owens

Thanks for being  
There for us.

Date:

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

My life felt scattered, very confusing and I was self destructive.

Since learning about my brain injury life is:

a little bit better because I am learning to deal with which help me cope better.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network is important to me

because: They keep me grounded. They educated me. I know I can reach out anytime.

I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know

this about brain injury: We need comprehensive care beyond mental health. We help communities with others.

Sincerely,

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ *Stacy Ann Smith*

January 22, 2021

To the members of the budget committee:

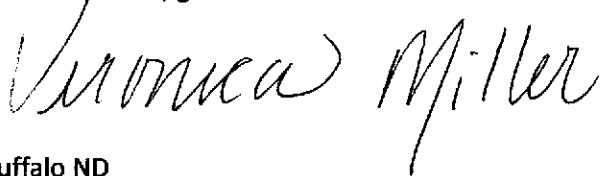
I would like to express my support towards the North Dakota Brain Injury Network, NDBIN. As a guardian working in North Dakota I see the growing need for the services provided by NDBIN. There are many individuals including the several I serve as guardian who are not able to get services through current the mental health system. This is very frustrating as a guardian. Often the services they do get are often one sided focusing on their mental health and not addressing the brain injury only the mental health or substance abuse. This strikes me odd as without the brain injury being addressed, I see a gap in their ability to utilize the services they are given. Either they cannot communicate effectively with their providers or cognitively they cannot take in the information provided by their providers and the cycle of mental health and or substance abuse continues.

My interactions with NDBIN have assisted me as far as education, consultation, and collaboration going as far as attending meetings involving my individuals with head injuries. My concern is that without this service I will not have the information I need to effectively assist my wards to be as independent as possible. I have genuinely enjoyed the education provided by this organization. Not only has it been an excellent source of a device volume of topics but it as allowed me to obtain the CEUs to retain my National Guardianship status. I look forward to continued opportunities to engage with NDBIN and hope that you will allow them the funding necessary to provide the level of education, consultation and support they currently offer.

Thank you very much for allowing me to voice my support on this matter. I feel that it is the duty of all of us especially the legislature to provide services to all North Dakotans especially those lives we can impact so significantly.

Sincerely,

Veronica Miller, guardian

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Veronica Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "V" at the beginning.

Buffalo ND

701-840-5207

Thursday 21  
to whom ever it may concern,

This is a letter about my care  
at NAMI and its benefits.

I have been with NAMI  
for about 1 year. I go to groups  
there and receive help  
from their wonderful staff.  
Toni McCartney is my case  
manager there and she is  
very good at what she  
does.

I also have a TBI and have  
a short memory span as a  
result of my TBI.

Since I have been with  
NAMI - they have helped me  
stay connected and also helped  
me live independently. It  
has made a difference  
in my life.

Thank you again.

Keano Sauvageau

Date: 1/21/2021

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

My life was confusing. I felt fearful of being taken advantage of but didn't understand why. I had a hard time communicating with people. My life felt disorganized.

Since Learning about my brain injury life is:

I feel better about myself and I feel empowered. It is good to connect with others and learn and share things. I no longer feel like I am just surviving I think that I can own things.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network with important to me because: They have educated me about my injury and through that I am coping better. They have advocated for me. They helped me to find NDA Brain Injury Services who are very supportive of me.

I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know this about brain injury: That people with Brain Injuries want to get better. And that they need different services than more traditional mental health services.

Sincerely,

Audrea Heath

Date: 1-22-2021

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

I struggled with many aspects of my life for a long time.

Since learning about my brain injury life is:

I am better equipped to be self-aware and far more apt to function within my abilities.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network is important to me because:

People need education and support to recognize and understand ALL the conditions of their lives.

I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know this about brain injury:

Many people are suffering because of this issue not even knowing that they are among others with similar needs and can recover more effectively with support and understanding.

Sincerely,

Alida Sackaj



Date: 1/22/2021

Dear Members of the Budget Committee:

Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:

basic, confusing and scattered and disorganized  
I didn't always understand why things  
went the way they did.

Since learning about my brain injury life is:

My life was more manageable. I still not  
under control by better I understand myself  
better.

North Dakota Brain Injury Network is important to me  
because:

I like having a place where I  
can get facts and answers. Nice to know  
that there is an advocate out there

I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know  
this about brain injury:

that I'm not mousible any more.  
that brain injuries are not the same as mental health  
Sincerely, we overlooked an important part of our health  
I hope we don't

John Bull

Date: 1-22-21

**Dear Members of the Budget Committee:**

**Prior to knowing about my head injury life was:**

very difficult for me. I had a hard time controlling my emotions and understanding what was happening to me and why.

**Since Learning about my brain injury life is:**

I now understand what is happening and now I'm not feeling alone anymore. There is a family at NIAM that is wonderful.

**North Dakota Brain Injury Network with important to**

**me because:** The support has been incredible that I have received and I do not know what I would do without it, NIAM has been indispensable. Their support and knowledge is vital to Brain Injury clients.

**I feel that the state of North Dakota needs to know this about brain injury:**

It's a very important issue that needs funding and needs to be addressed. This is an invisible illness worthy of attention!

**Sincerely,**

Chelsea E. McNair

Toni & Chrissie are one of the  
brightest lights in my work to  
work living ~~and~~ I am grateful  
to be one of their clients,

I am progressing as time goes on  
and now I realize I would be so  
lost without them. These guys are so  
special and dedicated that I feel my  
life is becoming a reflection of some of my  
dreams and they have restored a lot of  
my faith back into me. These guys  
are amazing to me. Thanks for letting  
me share my thoughts & sentiments.

God Bless  
Tony Gust