

Testimony in Opposition of HB 1012  
**Appropriations – Human Resources Division**  
Chairman: Representative Jon O. Nelson  
January 25, 2021

Submitted by: Dan Madler, Chief Executive Officer - Beyond Shelter Inc. (BSI),  
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Chairman Olson and members of the Committee, my name is Dan Madler, I live in ND District 27 and I am the CEO of Beyond Shelter, Inc. (BSI), a mission driven North Dakota nonprofit developer of affordable housing. I would like to express my opposition to House Bill 1012 because of the recommended cuts to the proposed supportive service funding for two (2) Housing First Projects, Cooper House, located in Fargo, ND and LaGrave On First, located in Grand Forks, ND and further, I oppose HB 1012 because it provides no supportive service funding for another Housing First Project, Edwinton Place, located in Bismarck, ND.

**Who is Beyond Shelter Inc.:**

- Mission Driven ND nonprofit developer of affordable housing
- To-date BSI has closed on the financing of 43 affordable housing projects producing 1,270 affordable homes
- BSI in partnership with several stakeholders/partners has developed three (3) Housing First Projects in ND (Cooper House, LaGrave On First, and Edwinton Place) producing 124 permanent supportive housing homes for households suffering from **chronic homelessness** - defined as individuals and families residing in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, and who have been homeless and residing in such a place for a least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years

**Invest in things that work and Housing First works:**

- Housing First is a proven model of ending homelessness
- It offers immediate access to housing with supportive services to follow
- Housing First is a cost-savings solution. The data and evidence is clear, Housing First saves North Dakota, ND Communities, and ND taxpayer's money. Chronic homeless households create the biggest financial burden on local medical, law enforcement, and service providers (see pages 11, 12, 39, and 40 of Housing the Homeless North Dakota's 10-year plan to End Long-Term Homelessness, Cooper House Impact Report, and Cooper House Financial Community Impact handout)

**The need for Supportive Service Funding is absolute:**

- If service providers are not able to staff the facility and provide onsite, person-centered treatment, individuals living at Housing First facilities would not be successful in their recovery, stabilization, and integration back into the community
- Supportive Service funding also provides for 24/7 staffing with a supervised entrance. This is necessary because without it, the Housing First Projects would experience unauthorized overnight guests, large parties, unlimited consumption of alcohol, weapons, and potentially an increase in violence, all of which impact a tenant's ability to remain housed

**Investments made to-date and continuing investment request:**

- \$22.6 Million in total development costs have been invested to provide the 124 Housing First homes (Cooper House – 42 homes, LaGrave On First – 42 homes, and Edwinton Place – 40 homes)
- For the 2019-2021 biennium, Cooper House received a \$550,000 general fund grant to provide services to individuals expiring chronic homelessness. I respectfully request Cooper House to be funded at **\$570,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium**
- For the 2019-2021 biennium, LaGrave On First received a \$375,000 general fund grant to provide services to individuals expiring chronic homelessness. I respectfully request LaGrave On First be funded at **\$515,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium**
- For the 2019-2021 biennium, Edwinton Place received \$0.00 from the general fund to provide services to individuals expiring chronic homelessness. I respectfully request Edwinton Place be funded at **\$640,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium**
- Total investment request = **\$1,725,000** which is an increase of **\$800,000** from the 2019-2021 base level funding

In closing, I would like to note that all three (3) Housing First Projects, Cooper House in Fargo, LaGrave On First in Grand Forks, and Edwinton Place in Bismarck, serve homeless households that come from all across North Dakota and I respectfully request your support for to fully fund supportive services for all three (3) Housing First Projects for the 2021-2023 biennium.

Thank you for your time and consideration.