

Dear Senate Appropriations Committee,

I am writing this letter to you to **maintain the brain injury funding in HB 1012 restored by the House including the funding for the North Dakota Brain Injury Network**. As a speech-language pathologist and certified brain injury specialist at Onward Therapy in Fargo, ND, we work closely with the NDBIN to best support our brain injury population throughout the state of North Dakota. Working with survivors of brain injury is one of the most rewarding areas in my field. Their lives have significantly and unexpectedly changed, which requires me to create a plan of care to best meet their daily functional needs. This journey is very challenging for most and it is my pleasure to walk with them, encourage them, and educate them as they strive to reach therapeutic and functional goals.

The NDBIN is extremely valuable to us as providers, as well as survivors and families. This network places great emphasis on educating about brain injury by providing valuable resources for education and awareness, as well as hosting continuing education opportunities to stay updated on the current research to best serve our patients. The NDBIN is much appreciated and is unlike any other service offered in our state. Reducing funding for the NDBIN would be detrimental to the brain injury population-the population that desperately needs us to advocate for them as they demonstrate resilience and grit in their journey to a "new normal".

Please reconsider funding the **NDBIN** so they can continue their mission to support and educate providers, survivors, and family members. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

*Whitney Johnson, MS. CCC-SLP, CBIS*

Whitney Johnson, M.S., CCC-SLP, CBIS

Email: [whitney@onwordtherapy.com](mailto:whitney@onwordtherapy.com)

Phone: 701.364.5433