

Testimony in Opposition of HB 1012
Senate Appropriations
Chairman: Senator Ray Holmberg
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Chairman Holmberg 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 as it is submitted to the Senate.

As submitted HB 1012:

- Does not adequately fund supportive services for three Housing First Projects; Cooper House, located in Fargo, ND, LaGrave On First, located in Grand Forks, ND, and Edwinton Place, located in Bismarck, ND and without this funding, the three Housing First Projects will not be successful
- Assumes that the 1915i re-alignment will make up the funding shortfalls. As you have heard and will hear others testify, this will not be the case. Currently a majority of the Chronic Homeless individuals/households currently housed at Cooper House, LaGrave On First, and Edwinton Place are not able to score high enough in the six (6) domains of the WHODAS 2.0 assessment to be eligible for Housing Supports offered under the current 1915i State Plan.

Housing First:

- Provides Permanent Supportive Housing to chronic homeless, individuals/households who have complex medical and emotional needs and who create the biggest financial burden on local medical, law enforcement, and service providers (i.e., WCHSC, SEHCS, NEHCS)
- You have the data, and the data and evidence are clear, Housing First saves North Dakota, ND Communities, and ND taxpayer's money (see Housing the Homeless North Dakota's 10-year plan to End Long-Term Homelessness, Cooper House Impact Report, and Cooper House Financial Community Impact handouts submitted online)

- Projects (Cooper House, LaGrave On First, and Edwinton Place) make WCHSC, SEHSC, and NEHSC more efficient and effective when providing services to Chronic Homeless individuals/households

1915i WHODAS 2.0 mismatch to VI-SPDAT:

- The **VI-SPDAT** is a pre-screening, or triage tool that is designed to be used by all providers within a community to quickly assess the health and social needs of homeless persons and match them with the most appropriate support and housing interventions that are available. This is the screening tool most often utilized by Cooper House, LaGrave On First, and Edwinton Place, yet as stated earlier, currently a majority of the Chronic Homeless individuals/households currently housed at Cooper House, LaGrave On First, and Edwinton Place are not able to score high enough in the six (6) domains of the WHODAS 2.0 assessment to be eligible for Housing Supports offered under the current 1915i State Plan. **Question**, is there a mismatch?

In summary I would say that now is not the time to cut supportive services to Cooper House, LaGrave On First, and Edwinton Place and I respectively request that this committee:

- Preserve the **\$22.6 Million** in total development costs that have been invested to provide the 124 Housing First homes (Cooper House – 42 homes, LaGrave On First – 42 homes, and Edwinton Place – 40 homes)
- Do no harm and fund Cooper House at **\$570,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium**
- Do no harm and fund LaGrave On First at **\$515,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium**
- Do no harm and fund Edwinton Place at **\$640,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium**
- request that DHS work with the Providers to determine if there is a mismatch between the 1915i WHODAS 2.0 and VI-SPDAT

Note: the above total investment request = **\$1,725,000** which is an increase of **\$800,000** from the 2019-2021 base level funding, and which allows for a period of transition to utilizing 1915i as a possible funding source for Housing First Projects

Thank you for your time and consideration.