

RE: HB 1012 - Section 11 Developmental Disability Program

Dear Chairman Holmberg and members of the committee,

As a caregiver of a person receiving Developmental Disability Services, I am writing to express my opposition to eliminating Section 11 funding as outlined in HB 1012. This program serves individuals who would otherwise "fall through the cracks" without the support provided by this program.

I have worked at Community Living Services for the past 35 years as a Case Manager. I have worked with several individuals through the years under the Section 11 program from the very beginning of when Section 11 funding was initially used to support the individuals we provided services to that "fell through the cracks" at that time. Through the years I have personally witnessed that nothing has changed in that regard, as we continue to still have this group of individuals we serve that direly need supports and continuity in the community. We continue to provide these vital services to individuals who without these supports would be homeless, vagrant, malnourished, mentally and physically ill and worst case scenario wouldn't be here at all or dead. We would like to think that were are humane society and that everyone matters and makes a difference, right? I have knowledge and professional experience in how vital the Section 11 supports are for the individuals we serve, as I have two individuals that I have worked with for almost 30 years. This includes providing services to prevent homelessness and vagrancy, rep payee assistance to establish residency, secure benefits, assistance with paying bills and maintaining their benefits. Other supports include assistance with procuring and maintaining employment, providing referrals, residential supports to maintain them living independently within the community and participating as an active member in society and monitoring and maintaining their health which include supports assisting with doctor appointments and follow through with medical recommendation's so they can remain living independently in their own apartments instead of being housed or institutionalized at the State hospital or in a nursing home, which is blatantly more expensive for the State of North Dakota in the end. CLS has almost half of the Section 11 individuals that are served in the State of North Dakota and unfortunately they will be left without these supports and on their own, as they will not qualify for or be able to transfer to a different program or funding source if this proposal is approved. I beg you to please reconsider. Thank you for your time and attention.

I strongly urge you to continue to fund this program and to provide continuity to those receiving Section 11 supports. Thank you for your continued service to the people of North

Dakota and for your consideration of continuing this service that supports people with disabilities to be as independent as possible in their communities.

Sincerely,

Signature: Michelle Haugen

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