

January 6th, 2021

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee,

I am a traumatic brain injury survivor from West Fargo. I'm passionate about ensuring a voice and gaining support for brain injury patients, survivors, their families and our communities, while increasing brain injury awareness in our state.

My testimony today is to provide insight regarding Senate Bill 2039, relating to membership of our state's Brain Injury Advisory Council. Years ago I sustained a traumatic brain injury; multiple skull fractures, a broken jaw and deafness in my left ear as a direct result.

The saying goes, "Don't judge a book by its cover," I'll add, "Everybody has a story." If you knew me, you may find my cover is like that of your daughter, spouse, friend or neighbor. However, like many, my story changed significantly as a result of a brain injury. While many didn't understand the trauma; my friends and trusted confidants became the doctors, college disability services, counselors, service providers, mentors like Nan and Rebecca and group members of NBBIN's support group.

When my pain seemed unimaginable, emotions unexplained and the future of what I could become as a brain injury patient were in question by not only me, but also close knit people surrounding me, these advocates and programs mentioned became crucial in my recovery, day to day living and successes.

A brain injury never goes away. However, these groups of people weren't ever going to let me be a statistic either. I am so grateful, yet I recognize the support, funding and awareness has to continue to increase, to allow people like myself to thrive and have connections with others who can relate and help offer solutions.

Thank you for your leadership, time and consideration as you represent our state to promote awareness, individuality, compassion and support to brain injury survivors, their families and caretakers. You're doing the people's work of our great state and your advocacy to continue and increase membership of the North Dakota Brain Injury Advisory Board is critical to the survivorship and long-term success of this group; whether they have sustained a brain injury or care for someone who has.

Please reach out to me at the contact information below, if I can share further insight or testimony.

Sincerely,

Bobbiann Froemke

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