

Testimony

Senate Bill 2215

House Appropriations- Human Service Committee

March 8th, 2023

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity, Chairman, Robin Weisz and members of the Human Service Committee.

My name is Carla Tice and I am the Program Director at the Listen Drop-In Center in Grand Forks. I am here today in support of Senate Bill 2215.

A Bill to help fund recreation and leisure activities for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Have you ever thought of a time when you have felt so blessed to have a nice vehicle to get you to and from where you are going. It will take you there safely, it will be wonderfully comfortable. It will be fuel efficient, and even have the best stereo system around. It even has room for many of your friends or family to go with. The Listen Drop-In and the Fargo Activity Centers are these vehicles for people with disabilities. The Leisure- Recreation offered takes them safely to places they never thought they would be, a summer night at the Ulland Softball diamond, playing on a men's or coed softball team side by side with everyone else in our community- batter up, because maybe are record reflects 8-2, but it is a win, win for everyone as without Listen's support our guys and gals wouldn't be out playing in this inclusive setting and given choice on what recreational activities that fulfill their needs. This goes the same for our support of individuals with disabilities being on regular bowling leagues. I'm out for coffee with one of the people we support, it is, "Hi Roberta, from many people and I say how do you know all these people and she replies I met them at bowling. Friday night dances bring over 100 people - dancing, socializing, having a bite to eat, a feeling like you belong and you can unwind after a long week. Dancing slow with the one, even when it is a fast song. The vehicle, leisure recreation brings over 900 people in Grand Forks with 15,000 plus visits a year to a place of confidence, self-esteem, friendships, new experiences and a better quality of life. A Performing Arts Production fills up the local theater Empire. People with disabilities who fall in the cracks, they have us. People who are short staffed they have us. People who need friends, they have us. People who need an affordable place to go to laugh, love and grow. We are here. For 25 years I am humbled to be part of such a great place, that does so many good things for so many good people in our state. We have made a difference for our fellow citizens and we thank you for your part in this. We are asking for the \$~~150~~150,000 per year for each center. We need to give people who have historically marginalized the ride of their life to a place where we can support them to find their purpose and see that we all have gifts to be respected without conditions. We do that at Listen and the Red River Community foundation, Activity Center.

Thank-you.