



February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrea Olson and I'm the Executive Director of Community Action Partnership of North Dakota (CAPND). We are a nonprofit organization representing the collective interests of our members and the low-income population of the state through representation and education for more than 40 years. The services provided by our regional Community Action Agencies serve low-income families, including those who have experienced homelessness.

CAPND fully supports HCR 3030 to study homelessness and barriers to housing across North Dakota. This study would be critical in evaluating the numerous components that adversely impact people experiencing poverty and homelessness in their efforts to have stable, safe, and affordable housing. Utilizing the results of the study could put our state into the realm of developing robust policy that utilizes evidence-based practices for meaningful solutions.

CAPND has been a partner with North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (NDDHHS) on the North Dakota Rent Help Program (NDRH) and can attest to not only its success, but also to its need. Every single month the number of applications to the program grows. To-date, NDRH has provided over \$96M in assistance to families across the state, including over 6,000 who were experiencing homelessness at time of application. In 2022, CAPND provided an average of 80 instances of homeless counseling each month.

Additionally, CAPND administers the statewide Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program; serving Veteran families who are either experiencing homelessness or who are on the verge of homelessness. CAPND provides services to over 300 Veterans each year.

In administering two large statewide programs that involve homelessness and housing, CAPND has seen how the provision of financial assistance, wrap-around supports, and meaningful case management can have a lasting impact. CAPND has also seen the critical involvement of the key people to deploy effective strategies. As you proceed with the potential study, CAPND emphatically supports the idea of involving all parties; service providers, housing authorities, consumers and people experiencing poverty, developers, and all pertinent community stakeholders. They all play a substantial role in moving the needle towards ending homelessness across North Dakota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Olson".

Andrea Olson, MS, CCAP, NCRT
Executive Director
Community Action Partnership of North Dakota