



Matthew Marshall  
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RE: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1014**

Senator Bekkedahl and Committee members:

As an economic development professional in Northeastern North Dakota, I have a firsthand look at the strain the lack of housing is placing on many communities. That lack of housing creates an environment where current businesses struggle to recruit new employees and fill vacancies by those retiring. This trend is also resulting in large areas of the state experiencing population loss which increases costs for the everyone calling North Dakota home.

Increased costs from population loss comes in the form of higher property taxes, lower levels of service, and eroding infrastructure that communities struggle to maintain. Many of our counties and cities were built to sustain much higher populations than what is being maintained today. Without utilizing the full potential of those regions, the cost burden is spread amongst fewer and fewer people and limits the opportunities for additional revenue to help. This puts upward pressure on property taxes, requirements for state aid, and everyday expenses for residents that live in these areas. Increasing available housing will increase the population and is one most practical solutions to solving the current problem.

The HIF portion of HB 1014 addresses a critical issue that can support new and revitalized housing in rural areas. However, the current allocation of \$12.5 Million is not sufficient to reach beyond our most populated communities. Please amend the legislation to above \$30 Million to ensure the program can meet the needs of communities both large and small. This investment will allow rural residents to remain in their homes while increasing the inventory for new families to repopulate our regions that have suffered loss over the past few decades. The infusion of people will support the growth of our local businesses and attract new industry to the area which will stabilize or lower costs for current residents and lesson the dependance on support from the state government. I ask for a "do pass" recommendation on HB 1014.

Sincerely,

**Matthew Marshall**

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Matt Marshall". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a dark green color.

**Economic Development Administrator**