



February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kelly Gorz the Associate Director of High Plains Fair Housing Center. The mission of the High Plains Fair Housing Center is to strengthen communities and to ensure equal access to fair housing in the region through training, education, enforcement and advocacy.

As part of our mission to advocate for North Dakotans experiencing housing discrimination, we operate an intake line. In the past year, we received over 1,000 calls and the majority of the calls are from people who are trying to remain housed and having difficulty navigating the intricacies of the landlord tenant relationship. With nowhere to turn many people call us requesting assistance in understanding their rights and responsibilities under Century Code Chapter 47-16 Leasing of Real Property. Although, this is outside our mission we do listen to people's concerns and try to refer them to agencies that may be able to assist them in remaining housed. Sadly, there are few organizations that can assist with legal support or mediation in housing which ultimately leads to homelessness.

With the unemployment rate so low in North Dakota, housing stability is crucial for the growth and prosperity of our economy.

High Plains supports HCR 3030 to study homelessness and barriers to housing across North Dakota. This study will be able to help practitioners and policy makers understand what are the most important barriers to housing stability. Importantly data from this study can assist lawmakers in making sound policy that can keep people housed. People who have stable housing have better health outcomes and better economic prospects which in the long run will help all of North Dakota.

Thank you,

Kelly Gorz

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Nothing in this letter is legal advice, for legal advice please see an attorney.