

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Testimony on Senate Bill 2304

January 31st, 2023

Submitted by Janelle Mitzel, Development Homes, Inc.

Madam Chairperson Larson & Committee Members,

Thank you for your consideration of a **Do Not Pass** on SB 2304. This bill will be detrimental to the organization I represent.

Development Homes, Inc:

- DHI is a non-profit organization in Grand Forks providing community-based support services to persons with disabilities from all over ND.
- DHI has residential services including seven group homes, two duplex facilities, a multi-unit autism living center, a transitional living center and independent living settings.
- DHI provides vocational services including job training and placement, and family services including respite care and in-home support.
- DHI serves approximately two hundred individuals from children to adults, serving through all stages of life.
- DHI is currently the 8th largest employer in Grand Forks, employing 450 to 500 people. Our economic footprint is vital to this community.

This bill adds the definition of an alcoholic beverage establishment, limiting charitable gaming to those establishments allowing only 21 years of age or older. This will eliminate gaming in café bars in rural ND, restaurant bars in every major city, hotel bars, senior centers and convention complexes. This bill is an attempt to drastically reduce existing gaming locations across the entire state. This bill paired, with other bills, are attempts to **significantly** reduce charitable gaming, hurt charities that are successful and stifle the charitable gaming industry.

Development Homes Gaming Revenue Uses:

- Provides financial funds necessary to supplement new projects, such as bricks & mortar. The \$900,000 DHI autism living center was funded through HUD with matching grants from DHI charitable gaming.
- Specialized adaptive equipment & urgent/crisis care needs for persons served.
- Basic care needs, such as eyeglasses, shoes, and clothing, especially for our children served with their continued growth and ever-changing needs.
- Specialized training for professional staff including nurses, social workers, and expert management.
- Grants to ND communities funding local needs, including police equipment, literacy adaptive equipment and software, drug & alcohol prevention, substance abuse and mental health professional facilitators, daycare facility equipment, and promotion of local community events.

DHI provides imperative services in our community. If these programs are not partially funded through gaming dollars, organizations such as DHI will be requesting major increases in state general fund dollars to supplement the necessary services we provide. Charitable gaming is particularly important to this organization as those dollars are needed to sustain our mission. DHI would appreciate a **Do Not Pass** recommendation on this bill.