



**1/18/2023**

**To: North Dakota Legislative Branch**

**RE: Testimony in support of Habitat for Humanity affiliates being exempt from traditional contractor licensing requirements and fees**

My name is Robbyn Rich, Owner of CHR Construction Services LLC. (North Dakota license number 56880, Minnesota license number BC724660) I am also the former Executive Director and Construction Manager of Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity.

As an industry professional I am in support of Habitat for Humanity affiliates to being given an exemption to the annual contractor licensing requirements and fees in the state of North Dakota for the following reasons:

1. Habitat for Humanity is a low income, non-profit housing organization. With the rising cost of home building all costs/fees that can be saved can then be put back into low-income housing, which is greatly needed across the country including the State of North Dakota.
2. As the former Executive Director and Construction Manager of Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity I am intimately familiar with their construction practices. Although the homes primary labor force are volunteers those volunteers are overseen by individuals that are skilled and experienced in the home building trades.
3. Habitat for Humanity affiliates are still required to comply with all state and local jurisdiction practices as it pertains to meeting and/or exceeding all established building codes (including the energy code), plan submittal and review, inspections as well as builder insurance requirements. In my experience Habitat for Humanity affiliates, not only locally but across the nation, exceed established best building practices and residential building code. Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity for example has built numerous Energy Star rated homes as well as a LEED-gold certified house in the state of North Dakota

Habitat for Humanity affiliates are not asking to be exempt from the best practices and quality home building requirements of the state, simply the process and related costs to obtaining a contractor's license as a non-profit organization serving low-income families across the state.