

January 29, 2025

HB 1003

North Dakota House Appropriations Committee

Testimony from Amy Boyd, Anti-Trafficking Program Manager, Youthworks

Chairman Nathe and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Boyd-Bolme; I am the Anti-Trafficking Program Manager for Youthworks; a non-profit agency that serves youth, ages eleven to twenty-four. I have come before you again in support of House bill 1003.

I am here to reiterate the needs of trafficked youth in North Dakota and to ask for an increase in Human Trafficking funds from the AG's budget.

Youthworks relies on the funds from the AG's office as match money for federal grants. For the past three legislative sessions, we have successfully used these funds to triple the impact of the funds from the state. Without this match, the services that Youthworks provides would be severely decreased. This upcoming year, Youthworks has the potential to increase its federal funding to nearly \$1 million dollars annually. However, this would require a match of \$327,500 state dollars per year. (655,000 for the biennium). With the current level of funding in the AG's budget at 1.1 million, Youthworks is requesting an increase of 500,000 so that services can be further expanded into rural areas.

The services that Youthworks provides includes trauma therapy, emotional support, and advocacy. In the last biennium, 147 youth were served, 3,196 nights of shelter or transitional housing were provided, 400 hours of clinical services were delivered as well as 1,800 hours of crisis intervention.

I will let Karlee Liddle, our HT Specialist, speak more in depth about what those services look like with the clients that she serves. She is truly a 'boots on the ground' worker who works with trafficked youth in both urban and rural communities, responding to crisis calls in the middle of the night as well as providing support to youth during investigations into their trafficker.

Again, I come before you today in support of HB 1003 and to urge you to increase the Human Trafficking funds in the Attorney General's budget.