

**House Appropriations Committee**  
**Representative David Monson - Chairman**  
**Testimony by Margo Haut via House Bill 1015**  
**January 16, 2025**

Chairman Monson & Members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Margo Haut, I am Founder and Co-Director of Guardian Angels, Inc., a nonprofit corporation located in Jamestown, ND. I also am a member & current President of the Guardianship Association of ND (GAND).

I respectfully request the consideration via the OMB Budget to include your support of the appropriation level of \$9.1million for the Public Administrators Support Services (PASS) Program. Approval will deem Guardianship Entities including Guardian Angels, Inc. the opportunity to hire & certify Professional Guardians allowing service to additional Protected Persons in need of Guardianship Services throughout ND.

The PASS Program via the ND Association of Counties provides reimbursement to Professional Guardians whose Protected Person's resources total less than 100% of poverty and/or are a recipient of Medicaid funded services.

Guardian Angels, Inc. has walked the journey with PASS Program since 2014. A few facts consist of the following:

- **Daily Rate**: In 2014, it was \$8.33 per day. The Rate increased in 2021 with an eventual increase to the current rate of \$17.50 per day established in 2024.
- **Employees**: Because of this increase in Daily Rate, we at Guardian Angels, Inc. who began with the Team of three is now a Team of Eight Employees who receives competitive salaries & benefits.

- **Caseloads:** Because of the increase in Employees, Guardian Angels, Inc. has increased the ability to provide Guardianship services. In 2015, Guardian Angels, Inc. had 9 Protected Persons qualify for the PASS Program. In 2018, 19 Protected Persons; in 2022, 89 Protected Persons with current caseload in 2024 being 119 Protected Persons. It should be noted, per the Advisory Group of the PASS Program, currently there is a cap of 125 Protected Persons for each entity.

Ultimately, there are people behind the paper.

As Guardians, the work provided is crucial for our Protected Persons to lead successful lives while maintaining the best quality of life. I've said it before & I'll say it again, "this is the most challenging yet rewarding work I have ever done!" Over this past week, my Team at Guardian Angels, Inc. has had to admit 3 Protected Persons on Hospice, approve procedures, prepare apartments for those in transition, assist Protected Persons in the community who are actively psychotic, and the list goes on... This may appear as burdensome work, but the reward is tenfold! When the man in psychosis has a moment of lucidness, and thanks you for finally getting him help. Or when the person with a terminal illness thanks you for being there to support them – these moments make it all worth it.

To reiterate, the PASS Program directly affects the feasibility for Guardian Angels, Inc. and other Guardianship Entities to serve not only our current caseloads, but those on waitlists. It is our vision and our hope to meet this dire need for Guardianship Services. Chairman Monson & Members of the House Appropriations Committee, I respectfully urge your approval of the appropriation level of \$9.1 million.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I stand for any questions.