



MINISTRY ON THE MARGINS

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Chairman Nelson and Members of the House Appropriations/HR Division,

My name is Nathan Mickelson, the Prison Reentry Manager at Ministry on the Margins (MOTM), a nonprofit in Bismarck – Mandan. As a local provider, administrator, and manager of Free Through Recovery and Community Connect programs, MOTM is in staunch support of the proposed budgetary expansions for these programs outlined in HB1012.

Ministry on the Margins has been a community staple serving the underserved, unhoused and re-entering populations for over 10 years. By utilizing Free Through Recovery and Community Connect with this at-risk population, MOTM has continued to help those “falling through the cracks.” By identifying and pairing those most in need with wrap around services, gap funding, care coordination and peer support services, these two programs serve an integral part in addressing each participants’ unique needs. Even in a “metro” area, identifying and delivering these resources remains a challenge yet with Free Through Recovery and Community Connect, MOTM can utilize these programs serving as a bridge to successful recovery, housing, employment, transportation, basic needs and mental-behavioral health resources.

In the previous biennium, as the budgets for these two programs were rapidly utilized, it became clear that additional financial support was needed. Waitlists and prioritization policies were instituted, leading to time lapses for referrals, often with some waiting months for services. With an overcrowded prison population, growth in the unhoused and dire need for access to mental-behavioral health programs statewide, Free Through Recovery and Community Connect require continued and additional financial support outlined in HB 1012.

Please consider additional state funding for these important programs to continue supporting the important work taking place here in the state of North Dakota.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Mickelson".

Nate Mickelson

Prison Reentry Manager

Ministry on the Margins

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