



**Testimony in Support of House Bill 1012
House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
2025–27 Health and Human Services Executive Budget Recommendation for
Appropriations Supporting Home and Community–Based Services
Wednesday, February 5, 2025 | 2:00 PM | Roughrider Room, State Capitol**

Chairman Nelson, Vice Chairman Stemen, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Erin Sorensen. I was born and raised on a farm in rural North Dakota, and I am a Registered Nurse and owner of Home Instead, a North Dakota Qualified Service Provider (QSP) Agency. Our agency serves communities across Minot, Bismarck, Hazen, and many small rural areas throughout the state. Additionally, in the fall of 2024, we opened an Agency Foster Home for Adults in Bismarck to further support North Dakotans in need of care.

Home Instead provides high-quality, in-home care services that allow seniors and individuals with disabilities to remain safely in their homes for as long as possible. We offer personalized care ranging from two hours a day to 24-hour support, assisting with activities of daily living, mobility, personal care, homemaking, companionship, transportation, medication reminders, and more.

I want to express my appreciation for previous state appropriations supporting home and community-based services. Today, I ask for your continued support by approving the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services Executive Budget in House Bill 1012, which includes critical funding for increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates for home care providers.

Without adequate reimbursement rates, home care agencies like mine struggle to recruit and retain skilled caregivers, leading to workforce shortages that put North Dakota's most vulnerable citizens at risk. Many caregivers travel over 45 miles just to reach their clients, and while they are deeply committed to their work, we must ensure they receive fair wages in addition to proper training, licensing, and the resources necessary to continue providing compassionate, quality care.

By investing in home and community-based services, North Dakota can:

- Ensure that seniors and individuals with disabilities receive care in their preferred setting—at home.



- Increase caregiver wages and benefits to help recruit and retain dedicated professionals in this essential industry.
- Reduce the strain on institutional care facilities, which are significantly more expensive than home care services.

Supporting home care is not just a moral obligation, it is a financially responsible decision that benefits families, caregivers, and small businesses across North Dakota. Without caregivers, there is no home care. We must invest in this workforce to meet the growing demand for in-home services and ensure that North Dakota remains a place where people can age with dignity.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1012 to help sustain and strengthen home and community-based services across our great state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Please feel free to contact me at 701-748-9953 or erin.sorensen@homeinstead.com if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Erin Sorensen RN, BSN

Owner, Home Instead

Satellite offices in Bismarck, Hazen and Minot