

Chairman Nelson and members of the committee,

My name is Jeremy Traen, I have been an employee of ShareHouse since 2006 and have served ShareHouse in various roles. I became a licensed addiction counselor in 2011 and the President and CEO of ShareHouse since 2023. My personal mission as an employee of ShareHouse has always been to provide the most robust SUD services for the state. I am testifying today in support of HB1012.

ShareHouse first started as a half-way house in 1975 and since then has expanded services. Today, we operate residential services for all North Dakota residents in Fargo and Grand Forks. We also provide recovery housing, outpatient SUD, standalone mental health services, and medication assisted treatment in Fargo. Several of these services are provided via telehealth, which we intend on continuing to expand, to better reach rural communities in North Dakota. I am proud to say in 2024 ShareHouse served just under 1,500 unique clients through all services. Of those, 380 unique clients were funded by the SUD Voucher offered by the State. Just over 300 unique clients were served in ShareHouse's IMD facility, located in Fargo. At any given time ShareHouse has just over 30 SUD Voucher clients receiving residential services in Fargo.

When I was originally hired by ShareHouse I worked as a Behavioral Health Technician at Robinson Recovery Center, which operated from a North Dakota grant for uninsured citizens who needed residential treatment for methamphetamine use. RRC, as I understand it, was a bit of a preamble to our current SUD Voucher. I have seen the development of the Voucher and witnessed firsthand the enormous impact it has had on North Dakotans throughout the entire State. It all is a sign of how well our providers, state departments, and legislators work together. I would like to share several short success stories from the SUD Voucher written by ShareHouse team members:

- I had one guy in the past year or so that stands out because they did not seem ready for treatment, and we thought they would leave early. They ended up staying a while in treatment and struggled with graduating/ the next steps because they felt like they were learning so much here. Their confidence grew month by month and you could see the hope and belief in themselves returning as they spent more time working on themselves and building themselves back up. They smiled more and more. They laughed more and more. They went from isolating to building a community with the guys here and it was inspiring to see.
- One gentleman found himself in the AA and NA community and dove into step work. He ended up getting a job through his sponsor and helped take care of a property for him. This allowed him to save up to get his own place and building support needed to help. They had a significant loss in the family (their dad) and used their support to get through it and remain sober. He attributed a lot of that to the connections he made through treatment.



- A 30ish year-old female and her parents were grateful for the voucher. She was at an in-between income, didn't have insurance, needed residential services and wanted the full gamut of treatment down through aftercare. Her parents attended sessions with the counselor while in outpatient; in the meetings the entire family expressed their gratitude for the services she was able to attend. She continued with aftercare for a while and was in services with us for nearly a year. She was also became a Recovery Living client.
- There was a 30ish year-old male. His first treatment course was 5 months, residential through LIOP. He did extremely well, however he had a relapse about 6 months later. The relapses and the treatment were both brief. He was in residential for about a month, then LIOP for another month and told us he felt confident to return to his support in the community. He has remained sober and has continued to refer clients to treatment and employed clients.
- There was a female around 30 years old. Her father was suffering from cancer; therefore, she wanted to stay in the area. She was grateful for the opportunity to attend treatment near him in the last weeks of his life. We don't know what is going on in her life now, but we do know she had that opportunity due to the voucher.

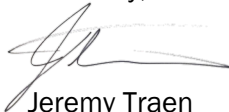
The \$2.5 million recommended additional dollars to the SUD Voucher is a great help to our field in combating addiction. I know it will go a long way in creating more success stories. I am in full support of such a decision and appreciate this committee's understanding of the level of need in North Dakota for the funds. This will allow for additional services throughout the State by the different participants of the SUD Voucher program.

During the 2023 legislation session, it was decided only 45% of SUD Voucher money would be allocated to IMD facilities. While it is understood the intent was to avoid certain providers using all the money there is a projected shortage allocated to IMD facilities and a projected overage for non-IMD facilities of almost the same amount. I am in full support for this committee to reallocate funding to avoid a shortage of services to North Dakotans. Currently, the only alternative is not admitting any SUD Voucher clients for several months. Should this happen, it would negatively affect upwards of 250 North Dakota citizens when factoring all IMD facilities.

In addition, I am in support to find a way to avoid the same shortage from happening during the 2025-2027 biennium. All in effort to continue the great work we all do in creating success stories for our people of North Dakota.

Thank you for your attention and time on this matter and I will answer any questions if there are any.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Traen  
President/CEO  
ShareHouse, Inc.

