

Chairman Nelson and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Morgan Layne, and I reside in Watford City. I serve as the Director of Operations for both Providence House and Providence House Minot. I am writing today to express our strong support for House Bill 1012, particularly as it pertains to the Behavioral Health Division and the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Voucher Program. This program is a vital resource in expanding treatment access for underserved populations and individuals in rural areas who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

Providence House welcomed its first clients July 2022 in McKenzie County, followed by the opening of Providence House Minot in December 2023. Each facility offers 16 residential treatment beds, ensuring individuals with ND Medicaid and Medicaid Expansion can receive services. In addition to residential care, we provide outpatient treatment services to support long-term recovery. Our dedicated team of 50 professionals brings diverse expertise, enriching our programs and enhancing client outcomes. We collaborate closely with external agencies, including Free Through Recovery and Community Connect providers, ND and Federal Probation & Parole, and other state programs to ensure individuals receive comprehensive support throughout their recovery journey.

The SUD Voucher Program acts as a critical safety net for individuals seeking treatment who lack insurance or the financial means to cover care costs – one of the most significant barriers to recovery. Many clients arrive at our facilities with limited resources due to the devastating effects of addiction. This program allows them to begin necessary treatment while they work toward securing insurance coverage. In 2024 alone, 64 individuals served benefited from the SUD Voucher, with many others entering treatment with acceptance into the program, but transitioning to insurance-covered care for costs associated with their treatment.

The the BHD and SUD Voucher team plays an essential role in ensuring its success. Their hard work and dedication make this program possible by streamlining processes, coordinating with providers, and ensuring funding reaches those who need it most. Through their commitment to expanding access, reducing barriers, and maintaining program integrity, they help individuals receive life-changing treatment in a timely manner. Providence House is incredibly grateful for their dedication and the invaluable work they do every day.

A key feature of the SUD Voucher Program is that it allows individuals to choose their treatment providers. This flexibility is crucial, as it empowers individuals to select services that best meet their unique needs, ultimately increasing the likelihood of a successful recovery. House Bill 1012 ensures that a portion of the funding is allocated to Non-IMD programs with sixteen or fewer beds—an essential step in maintaining a diverse range of treatment options. Community-based programs like ours offer flexibility in tailoring treatment to individual needs, emphasize recovery-oriented approaches, and are adaptable to serve diverse populations, particularly in rural areas. At Providence House, we strive to provide an environment that fosters long-term recovery and stability, with a home-like atmosphere, step-down services, and a strong recovery

community where individuals receive support and encouragement from those who have walked a similar path.

Investing in the SUD Voucher Program has far-reaching economic and social benefits that extend beyond individual recovery. Effective treatment reduces the burden on healthcare systems by lowering emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and long-term medical costs associated with untreated substance use disorders. Additionally, it decreases crime rates linked to substance use by addressing the root causes of addiction, leading to fewer instances of incarceration and recidivism.

Furthermore we believe that investing in accessible treatment fosters safer, healthier communities by breaking the cycle of addiction and improving overall public health. When individuals receive the support they need, the ripple effects extend to families, schools, workplaces, and entire neighborhoods, creating a more stable and prosperous society for all. House Bill 1012 ensures the continued success of this vital program, helping individuals on their recovery journey while delivering lasting economic and social benefits.

In conclusion, House Bill 1012 and the SUD Voucher Program represent a compassionate and practical approach to addressing substance use disorders in North Dakota. This funding is critical to the continued success of this program, ensuring individuals receive the care they need when they need it. We urge you to support this bill and continue to invest in the health and well-being of our fellow residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

Morgan Layne

