



# BILLINGS COUNTY

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**Billings County Commission**

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March 3, 2025

House Political Subdivisions Committee

VIA email testimony to: [lcouncil@ndlgis.gov](mailto:lcouncil@ndlgis.gov)

RE: IN FAVOR OF SB 2225 - A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of commerce for a housing for opportunity, mobility, and empowerment (HOME) program

Chairperson Longmuir and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Billings County Commission, I am writing for your support of SB 2225. The County would like to begin by thanking the North Dakota Department of Commerce and the ND Housing Initiative Advisory Committee for their guidance and work on drafting this bill which seeks to provide a program to assist housing development in North Dakota communities. There has been positive momentum for this bill in the Senate and the county hopes this momentum will continue in the House after cross-over.

The North Dakota Housing Initiative Advisory Committee established the Goal to: *Remove housing as a workforce barrier by unleashing the power of the private market to increase access to housing that is attainable to people living and working in North Dakota.*

This goal of the State aligns with the following policies of the Billings County Comprehensive Plan:

- *Ensure **access of all residents** of the County to the local housing market.*
- *Promote use of and **coordination with state** and federal housing programs.*
- *Encourage housing development to **meet changes in the demands** of the local economy.*

The Medora area is projected to need 50-60 housing units within the next 2 years and another 150 units in the next 5-10 years, but we're challenged for housing development because of limitations that increase the typical costs of construction. Lack of water and sewer infrastructure, unique and difficult terrain, and a high percentage of state and federal lands all contribute to increased housing costs that developers must pass on to the homebuyer.

Public-private-partnerships are essential for developing affordable housing and the private market must collaborate with the local municipalities to provide this needed infrastructure for North Dakota's workforce. Billings County is committed to support housing and we appreciate the State's involvement as a local public partner as well. Thank you for considering these issues when making your recommendation & appropriation.

Sincerely,

Dean Rodne

Chairperson, Billings County Commission