

Testimony in Support of SB 2030
Senate Appropriations – Education and Environment Division
Chairman: Senator Ronald Sorvaag
January 21, 2025

Submitted by: Dan Madler, Chief Executive Officer - Beyond Shelter, Inc.
701-730-2734, dmadler@beyondshelterinc.com, Lobbyist #30

Chairman Sorvaag and members of the Committee, my name is Dan Madler, and I am the CEO of Beyond Shelter, Inc., a mission driven North Dakota nonprofit developer of affordable housing that has developed over 1,350 quality affordable housing units across the state. I would like to express my support for Senate Bill 2030 and the appropriations that it provides for homeless grants, a homelessness study, matching grants for homelessness liaison services, and the requested \$200,000,000 to fund the Housing Incentive Fund (HIF) over a four-year period.

SB 2030 as it relates to HIF is:

- A **Bold** plan that provides funding at a scale (\$200M) that would actually have an impact, that would actually move the needle (i.e., based on what Beyond Shelter is currently seeing in regards to the demand for affordable housing across that state, we currently have a planned pipeline that would provide 229 units of affordable housing and serve the communities of Minot, Jamestown, West Fargo, and Fargo. This pipeline has an estimated Total Development Cost of \$89M and a \$200M investment in HIF would play a key role in moving these pipelines developments forward)
- An investment in affordable housing, which is critical for the growth and health of **all** ND communities
- Essential for competitiveness and would allow ND to stay competitive with its neighbors (i.e., in 2023 SD passed a \$200M affordable housing Bill and Minnesota during its last legislative appropriation session passed a \$1B+ affordable housing Bill)
- A way to put ND muscle into a tool that would address what the data is telling us, that there is a statewide demand for affordable housing. There is demand from Williston, to Minot, to Dickinson, to Jamestown, to Grand Forks, and to Fargo/West Fargo

Demand Example 1: Beyond Shelter opened an affordable senior housing development in August of 2024. The development is called The Plaza Apartments and Plaza Apartments has 39 apartment homes with a mix of 1 & 2 bedrooms. We not only leased up The Plaza Apartments quickly, but during the peak of taking applications, we had 172 senior households on a wait list to rent one of the 39 affordable apartment homes. Now me personally, I have been working in affordable housing for 31 years, and I have never seen such a high demand, such a high need for one of our affordable apartment homes.)

Demand Example 2: As of 12.31.2024, Beyond Shelter's average vacancy rate for 569 affordable senior housing homes serving Minot, Dickinson, and Fargo was 1.9% = 11 vacancies.

- A great way to leverage state funds with federal funding. As designed, HIF is very nimble and works very well with all affordable housing federal funds that ND currently receives.

In closing, I respectfully request your support for SB 2030.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I stand for any questions that you may have.