

**2015 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES**

**SB 2289**

# 2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Human Services Committee Red River Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
1/26/2015  
22510

- ☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Donald Mueller*

### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A bill to provide an appropriation to the Department of Human Services for assistive technology services.

### Minutes:

Attach #1: Testimony by Judie Lee  
Attach #2: IPAT Brochure  
Attach #3: Testimony by Bob Puyear  
Attach #4: Testimony by Denise Arntson  
Attach #5: Testimony by Betty Cariveau  
Attach #6: Testimony by Mary Rebenitsch  
Attach #7: Testimony by Michael Keller  
Attach #8: Testimony by Denise Harvey  
Attach #9: Written testimony by Mary Dockter  
Attach #10: Written testimony by Eugenie Lang  
Attach #11: Written testimony by Carol H. Olson  
Attach #12: IPAT Examples of Services  
Attach #13: IPAT Folder

**Chairman Judy Lee** introduced SB 2289 to the committee. IPAT (interagency program for assisted technology) is a provider of services to people who benefit from assisted technology and continue to grow in the services that are requested. Because of reduction in federal funding and need for more services, the funding identified in the Governor's budget is inadequate. Without an expansion of the funds for IPAT, services will be cut or reduction in staff if the bill is not passed. These services help people remain in their homes.

**Judie Lee**, Chief Executive Officer for the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology, or IPAT, testified IN FAVOR of SB 2289 (attach #1)(3:05-13:10)

Also provided the following information:

- IPAT brochure - Helping North Dakotans of All Ages and Abilities Engage in Life. (attach #2)
- IPAT Examples of Services (attach #12)
- IPAT Folder (attach #13)

**Senator Warner** asked how IPAT interacts with vocational rehabilitation? Do you have a similar mission, but different population?

**Ms. Lee** indicated that they coordinate work with Vocational Rehabilitation, but primary was in regards to an individual. It can be a simple technical assistance call, what potential assistive technology equipment might be out there. If it gets more significant, they can do an AT assessment for vocational rehabilitation client. They also coordinate with counselors for employment and also more sophisticated equipment.

**Senator Axness** referred to Ms. Lee's testimony. The request is for an increase of \$500,000. Did the governor include an appropriation in his budget currently, and if so, what was that funding level?

**Ms. Lee** indicated the funding level goes back to the original funding from 8 years ago, and then the additional \$500,000.

**Chairman Judy Lee** referred to Ms. Lee's testimony, table 1.

End of Ms. Lee's testimony.

**Bob Puyear** testified IN FAVOR of SB 2289 (attach #3) (about 16:00-17:35)

**Ms. Peggy Schierly** testified IN FAVOR of SB 2289. (18:00-23:07). Ms. Schierly and her staff provided an actual I-PAD to the committee members to interactively demonstrate different assistive technology that is available for homes. This interactive software product is used in their virtual showroom, and can be used at home visits to help identify and determine assisted technology devices that can support people in their homes.

**Senator Dever** stated that for visually impaired, this is fascinating. What impressed about this are applications on the I-PAD are sometimes not very expensive.

**Ms. Schierly** indicated that is correct. The cost of AT is coming down.

**Senator Dever** stated that it becomes helping people become aware of this equipment. Do you provide that service in addition to the devices?

**Ms. Schierly** indicated that is the heart of their service. It is that value added piece of what the average person understands about an IPAD and applications, and we take it to the next level, and help people understand that those applications can also be used in different ways to keep people that are aging or have disabilities home safe, and engaged.

**Chairman Judy Lee** stated that looking at other icons in the kitchen, these tools to get into the top row in the cupboard is helpful for anyone. At a time when we hear about falls, some of these assisted tools can help.

**V. Chairman Oley Larsen** is the equipment, such as the bath chair, on a checkout, or do folks have to buy and then hand them back in?

**Ms. Schierly** indicated they can rent it, try it and see if it works. If it does, then they look at purchasing avenues, private or 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance, alternative financial loan program through IPAT, as wells as a peddling-for-possibilities through grant through IPAT.

End of testimony.

**Denise Arntson** testified in favor (attach #4) (about 27:00-30:08)

**Betty Cariveau** testified in favor (attach #5) (30:23-31:57)

**Mary Rebenitsch** testified in favor (attach #6) (31:57-34:10)

**Michael Keller** testified in favor (attach 7) (34:10-37:49)

**Denise Harvey**, Protection and Advocacy Project, testified in favor (attach #8) (38:05-38:55)

Written testimony was provided by the following individuals and provided to committee members.

- **Mary Dockter**, PT, PhD (attach #9)
- **Eugenie Lang** (attach #10)
- **Carol H. Olson**, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA (attach #11)

#### OPPOSITION

No opposed testimony provided

#### NEUTRAL

No neutral testimony provided

#### Closed Public Hearing

**Senator Warner** moved a DO PASS recommendation to SB 2289 and re-refer to appropriations. The motion was seconded by **Senator Axness**. No discussion.

#### Roll Call Vote:

5 Yes, 1 No, 0 Absent

**Senator Dever** will carry the bill.



Date: 01/26 2015  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. SB 2289

Senate Human Services Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☒ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar

Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Warner Seconded By Axness

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Judy Lee (Chairman)	✓		Senator Tyler Axness	✓	
Senator Oley Larson (V-Chair)		✓	Senator John M. Warner	✓	
Senator Howard C. Anderson, Jr.	✓				
Senator Dick Dever	✓				

Total (Yes) 5 No 1

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Dever

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2289: Human Services Committee (Sen. J. Lee, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (5 YEAS, 1 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2289 was rereferred to the **Appropriations Committee**.

**2015 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS**

**SB 2289**

# 2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
2/2/2015  
Job # 22952

- ☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the Department of Human Services for assistive technology services.

### Minutes:

Testimony # 1 - 13

**Chairman Holmberg** called the committee to order on Monday, February 02, 2015, at 10:30 am in regards to SB 2289. All committee members were present. Michael Johnson, Legislative Council and Lori Laschkewitsch, OMB were also present.

**Senator Robinson:** I am supportive of this bill and one of the sponsors. The dollars here are a small investment to assist these folks to continue to enhance their lives. We have folks struggling with these issues across the state. We have several folks here that are prepared to testify today. This is an important bill with a relatively small amount of money.

**Judie Lee, Chief Executive Officer for the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology**, (IPAT) testified in favor of SB 2289 and provided written Testimony Attached # 1. Which is her statement of what IPAT stands for and also includes several handouts included in her testimony. (14.36) The attachments in her testimony are as follows:

- A. Organizations served by IPAT. (7 pages)
- B. IPAT Brochure (6 pages)
- C. Helping North Dakotans Across the Lifespan Engage In Life (5 pages)
- D. Brochure - Used Equipment Program (6 pages)
- E. Letter of support - Andrea Leftwich, Speech-language pathologist.
- F. Letter of support - Judy Bahe, Physical Therapist.
- G. Letter of support - Kevin P. Murphy, MD, Medical Director for Pediatric Rehabilitation at Sanford, Bismarck Rehabilitation Center. (2 pages)
- H. Letter of support - Dr. Carol Olson, Associate Professor in Occupational Therapy education program at U of Mary
- I. Letter of support - David Valenzuela, Minerals Manager with USDA Forest Service, father of a special needs child. (2 pages)

**Chairman Holmberg** announced that Senator Kilzer, Senator Erbele and Senator Mathern are on the subcommittee for this bill. He commented about the on-going spending and that adjustments will need to be made regarding the funding available.

**Bob Puyear, serve on IPAD's board of directors.** Testified in favor of SB 2289  
Testimony Attached # 2

**Peggy Shirealee:** testified in favor of SB 2289 and showed the IPAD Ap, demonstrating what Home First Showroom does for the disabled person.

**Denise Arntson works at American Bank Center** and stated she has been involved with the non-profit organization Rebuilding Together Greater Bismarck Mandan, testified in favor of SB 2289 and presented written Testimony Attached # 3 stating the help IPAD gives for people to remain safely in their homes longer.(23.42)

**Cari Duncan, Chair of local Autism support Group in Minot** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 4. They have 3 boys in their home that have some type of disability and how IPAD has helped their children. (26.13)

**Melissa Taylor, Professor in physical therapy representing Mary Dockter, Director of the University of Mary's Program in Physical Therapy** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 5.

**Michael Keller, a disabled person** testified in favor of SB 2289 and asked for support for this bill and submitted Testimony Attached # 6.

**Mary Rebinitsch, retired home care nurse** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 7.

**Shirley Ryberg, Business Manager or Burleigh County Special Education Unit** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 8.

**Eugenie Lang, Retired nurse** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 9. (37.09)

**Betty Cariveau, Bismarck Homemaker** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony #10.

**Cindy Vollner, served on Consumer Advisor Committee** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 11.

**Josh Asvig, Associate State Director of Advocacy for AARP ND** submitted Testimony Attached # 12 and stated we support the bill.

**Denise Harvey with Protection and Advocacy** testified in favor of SB 2289 and submitted Testimony Attached # 13.

**Chairman Holmberg** closed the hearing on SB 2289

# 2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
2/12/2015  
Job # 23768

☒ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Alvin Delzer done by Carrie Wining*

### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A subcommittee hearing for DHS (Assistive technology Services)

### Minutes:

Attachments 1 - 4

**Senator Kilzer:** called the subcommittee to order on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at 2:50 pm in the Senate Conference Room on SB 2289. All subcommittee members were present: Senator Kilzer, Senator Mathern and Senator Erbele. Also present: Michael Johnson, Legislative Council and Lori Laschkewitsch, OMB.

**(3:21) Senator Kilzer:** Looking particularly at the financing, my question would be to ask what the situation is in the present funding and what is in the governor's budget.

**Judie Lee, CEO, IPAT:** Currently the funding budget in the Governor's budget is \$500,000 for the biennium, and this bill is requesting an additional \$500,000. It appears under the division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the DHS. See Attachment #1 for IPAT Funding History - federal and state. Down \$160,000 due to a decrease in federal funding.

**Senator Kilzer:** So you are now asking for \$500,000?

**(7:07) Judie Lee:** We are asking for \$160,000 to offset the federal decrease and the \$350,000 is a proposal to expand the infrastructure of IPAT so we can meet the demands and the needs of the people in the state, but particularly in the western part of the state. Our data is reflecting that we are not reaching those folks. **(See Attachment #2)**

**(12:45) Senator Erbele:** On these first two graphs, is there any reason why there was that dip in 2011-2013 time period?

**Judie Lee:** We do not. We look at some of those things and sometimes it is within the change of types of equipment that people are looking for. We are pretty involved with schools in rental equipment. Sometimes they have an influx of dollars. There are a number of reasons, but I do not think I can tell you positively what happened.



**Senator Erbele:** Are these new numbers at the top of the columns or are some of them duplicate information from other years?

**Judie Lee:** They could be similar people coming back. That is an excellent question. Typically an individual that rents is probably good for 3 or 4 years. For a school they might be returning again. That is very typical to be renting for a different child but the same renter. Because it is a 60 day trial, it is not to replace purchasing something for an individual. They typically move on.

**Senator Erbele:** The federal decrease, is that related to our decrease in the FMAP?

**Judie Lee:** the decrease is a little complicated as to why we have it. They have given us no indication.

**Senator Kilzer:** Is there any way to increase the federal amount?

**Judie Lee:** There is not. It is a formula. It is based on population. We should be receiving \$400,000 now but we are receiving \$300,000 or \$350,000.

**Senator Kilzer:** What is the relationship between DHS and IPAT? Is there a contract?

**Judie Lee:** There is a contract. The Department of Human Services is our lead agency. So the money flows through them from the federal government to IPAT. IPAT was part of the state government for 10 years and then we moved out of state government into the non-profit world. We have had a working relationship with DHS from the beginning.

**Senator Kilzer:** Do you have a competitor?

Judie Lee: We do not.

**Senator Kilzer:** Who sets the fees for the devices?

**Judie Lee:** We do not sell anything and we are strictly a resource for the state of North Dakota. We are an information provider, and we provide programs such as renting equipment, demonstrations, and consulting. Any services we provide through the IPAT federal dollars are free, and certain ones like the rental program, we can charge basic fees to recoup the cost of maintenance of equipment and that sort of things. Those kinds of fees go back into the IPAT dollars to be used in the program.

**Senator Kilzer:** So, there really isn't any turn back or carryover from one biennium to the next?

**Judie Lee:** No. I think that is why there is a little dip in the federal dollars. We did have some carryover when we moved from one federal agency into another.

**Senator Kilzer:** Do you run out of money before the end of the biennium and then you have to tell everybody no?

**Judie Lee:** We have not. We are pretty careful with our budget process that we have. We can leverage some other funding by stretching resources and dividing costs between programs.

**Senator Kilzer:** Are you in the hearing aid business?

**Judie Lee:** No, we do hearing amplification systems that people can come and try out. We work with audiologists on those kinds of things. We also work with the deaf/blind on telecommunication for the FCC. We are a one stop shop for assistive technology in the state of North Dakota. People might come in for a telephone and end up finding all sorts of other things that can help them live safely at home. So by having the infrastructure to help the other agencies do those things, we can save everybody money.

**(21:06) Senator Erbele:** (Referring to a chart) Where's the line?

**Judie Lee:** Our line is right between Jamestown and Bismarck. We kind of try to do it as Human Service Centers. (See Attachment # 3)

**(24:40) Senator Kilzer:** There is a request for \$500,000 in this bill. How did you arrive at that?

**Judie Lee:** We looked at the data, and originally we were proposing \$350,000 to expand the offices in Bismarck. We wanted to add 2 to 3 more people and we would of course need more space. Then we would also need an increase for operations. The second part of the bill is due to being \$160,000 short of Federal dollars. So the \$340,000 would push forward to the western part of the state.

**Senator Erbele:** Did you make the pitch to the Governor?

**Judie Lee:** We did not. We did send notice to the Department of Human Services.

**Senator Mathern:** How is it that vocational rehabilitation, in light of being a pass through agency, supervises what you do, or do you report to the feds directly?

**Judie Lee:** We typically do the report and collect all the data and send it to the director. Through the contract and monitoring of the spending, our records are reviewed, there is a review of our expenses and invoices, we are monitored in that same manor.

**Senator Erbele:** If everything stays the same, and you're \$160,000 short, what falls off?

**Judie Lee:** We have to take a look at what that will be. We have a position in Fargo that we have not filled. We are holding on that to see what happens here. We are very involved with a lot of agencies. (Gives examples) We will probably have to say no to some of those kinds of requests. In the end, people are going to search for the technology because they know that something is out there, but they'll make some expensive choices due to the services contained in what we do. I think we have asked our staff to do everything they can do. They are a very hard working group of people. Our numbers will go down.

**Judie Lee:** See Attachment #4 for additional information in regards with cost effectiveness and return on investment.

**Senator Kilzer:** Closed the hearing on 2289.

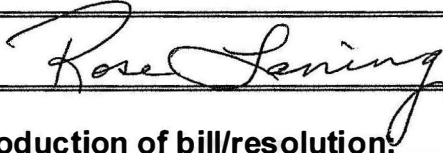
# 2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Appropriations Committee**  
Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
2/17/2015  
Job # 24032

☒ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## **Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:**

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the Department of Human Services for assistive technology services.

## **Minutes:**

Senator Kilzer, Senator Erbele, and Senator Mathern were all present.

Senator Kilzer said this was the IPAT bill. Federal funds had dropped from \$888,000 down to \$724,000 which is a drop of about \$160,000 from the previous biennium. The state funding had been flat-lined at \$500,000 per biennium and I propose that we make up the difference of \$160,000. We would change the bill from \$500,000 that was requested to \$160,000 so between the state and federal would make them even.

**Senator Kilzer moved to amend the bill from \$500,000 to \$160,000.**  
**Senator Erbele seconded.**

**Senator Mathern:** I want to get the bill passed and that is more money.

**Vote passed 3-0.**

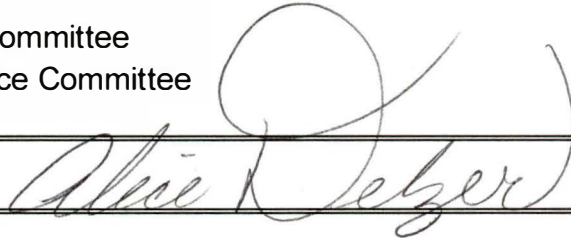
# 2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
2/18/2015  
Job # 24084

☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the DHS for assistive technology services  
(Do Pass as Amended)

### Minutes:

Testimony # 1

Chairman Holmberg called the committee to order on Wednesday, February 18 2015 in regards to SB 2289. All committee members were present. as were Michael Johnson, Legislative Council and Lori Laschkewitsch, OMB.

**Senator Kilzer** explained the amendment # 15.0784.01001, Testimony Attached # 1. The amendment reduces that down to \$160,000. And the reason it's \$160,000 is because that is the amount that the federal grants are being reduced and this would make up for the federal grants and would make them at the same level of funding as the present biennium. They have received \$500,000 per biennium for quite a few years from the state and they had received \$888,000 and then were reduced to \$724,000, so this is the \$160,000 makeup. I would move the amendment. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Senator Erbele.

**Chairman Holmberg:** called for a voice vote on the amendment. It carried. Now can we have a motion on the bill.

**Senator Mathern moved a Do Pass as Amended. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Senator Robinson .**

**Chairman Holmberg:** Call the roll on a Do Pass as Amended on SB 2289.

A Roll Call vote was taken. Yea: 13; Nay: 0; Absent: 0.

Senator Mathern will carry the bill.

The hearing was closed on SB 2289.

15.0784.01001  
Title.02000

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for  
Senator Kilzer

February 18, 2015

TD  
2/18/15

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2289

Page 1, line 5, replace "\$500,000" with "\$160,000"

Renumber accordingly



Date: 2-17-15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

Senate Appropriations Committee

☒ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: Amend The bill from 500,000 to \$160,000

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☒ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Kilzer Seconded By \_\_\_\_\_

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Holmberg			Senator Heckaman		
Senator Bowman			Senator Mathern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Senator Krebsbach			Senator O'Connell		
Senator Carlisle			Senator Robinson		
Senator Sorvaag					
Senator G. Lee					
Senator Kilzer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Senator Erbele	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Senator Wanzek					

Total (Yes) \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Date: 2-18-15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

Senate Appropriations

15,0784, 01001

Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☒ Adopt Amendment  
☐ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Kilger Seconded By Erbele

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Holmberg			Senator Heckaman		
Senator Bowman			Senator Mathern		
Senator Krebsbach			Senator O'Connell		
Senator Carlisle			Senator Robinson		
Senator Sorvaag					
Senator G. Lee					
Senator Kilzer					
Senator Erbele					
Senator Wanzek					

Total (Yes) \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

voice vote

Date: 2-18-15  
Roll Call Vote #: 2

**2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**ROLL CALL VOTES**  
**BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289**

Senate Appropriations Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☒ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Mathern Seconded By Robinson

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Holmberg	✓		Senator Heckaman	✓	
Senator Bowman	✓		Senator Mathern	✓	
Senator Krebsbach	✓		Senator O'Connell	✓	
Senator Carlisle	✓		Senator Robinson	✓	
Senator Sorvaag	✓				
Senator G. Lee	✓				
Senator Kilzer	✓				
Senator Erbele	✓				
Senator Wanzek	✓				

Total (Yes) 13 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Mathern

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2289: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2289 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 5, replace "\$500,000" with "\$160,000"

Renumber accordingly

**2015 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES**

**SB 2289**

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Human Services Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
3/9/2015  
Job #24504

☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Provide an appropriation to the DHS for assistive technology services.

### Minutes:

Testimonies 1-16

Chairman Weisz opened the hearing on SB 2289.

Judie Lee: Chief Executive Officer for the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) testified in support of the bill. See Testimony #1.)

Senator Judy Lee: Introduced and testified in support of the bill. This enables people to stay home rather than having to go to a higher setting. There were two components to the original bill that I believe strongly in the original bill and would encourage you to take a peek at that actually. There is the money which allows them to maintain the program they currently have because there has been a flat funding there for some time. The second component of the original bill is what it takes in order for them to provide the services that are already being requested and needed in the west where population and needs are growing. Maybe you could see restoring the whole thing because there are folks out there that need these services and can't get them.

7:02

(Judie Lee continued reading her testimony.)

Bob Puyear: Testified in support of the bill. (See Testimony #2)

Peggy Shireley: Testified in support of the bill. (See Testimony #3) She presented a video of a show room in Fargo that displays all the ways the disabled can live independently.

26:13

Denise Arneson: Testified in support of the bill. (See Testimony #4)

29:24

Eugenie Lang: (See Testimony #5)



Michael Keller: (See Testimony #6)

Mary Rebenitsch: (See Testimony #7)

37:37

Josh Ashvig: (See Testimony #8)

Denise Harvey: (See Testimony #9)

NO OPPOSITION

Chairman Weisz closed the hearing on SB 2289.

Testimony of support handed in.

Dr. Carol Olson, Associate Professor in the Occupational Therapy education program at the U of Mary. (See Testimony #10)

Andrea Leftwich, M.S. CCC-SLP (See Testimony #11)

Tracey M.E. Lockrem, MS/CCC (See Testimony #12)

Cari Duncan (See Testimony #13)

Judy Bahe, PT, MPT (See Testimony #14)

Mary Dockter, PT, PhD (See Testimony #15)

David Valenzuela (See Testimony #16)

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Human Services Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
3/24/2015  
Job #25369

- ☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Minutes:

Chairman Weisz: Let's take up 2289 which is the IPAC bill. It has around \$160,000 in it.

Rep. Porter: Was there discussion in regard to once the person doesn't need the technology; does it come back into the program and reissue it?

Chairman Weisz: They can bring the equipment back and rent it out or sell it.

Rep. Porter: There wasn't a fiscal note that was off from rental?

Chairman Weisz: I don't believe it was broke down on. They show the numbers of rentals. In the original bill they wanted to expand the services greater than what they were doing and requested \$500,000. \$160,000 to replace the federal drop and \$340,000 for expansion. The Senate sent it out with just the \$160,000 increase to cover the federal drop. I was impressed with their virtual house program.

Rep. Fehr: I motion a Do Pass on engrossed SB 2289.

Rep. D. Anderson: Second.

Chairman Weisz: And re-referred to Appropriations.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 13 y 0 n 0 absent

Bill Carrier: Rep. Hofstad

Date: 3-24-15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

House Human Services Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☒ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar

Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Rep. Fehr Seconded By Rep. D. Anderson

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Weisz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Mooney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vice-Chair Hofstad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Muscha	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Bert Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Oversen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Dick Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Rich S. Becker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Damschen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Fehr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Kiefert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Porter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Seibel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Total (Yes) 13 No 0

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Assignment Rep. Hofstad

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2289, as engrossed: Human Services Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman)**  
recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee**  
(13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2289 was  
rereferred to the **Appropriations Committee**.

**2015 HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS**

**SB 2289**

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
4/3/2015  
25799

- ☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of human services for assistive technology services.

### Minutes:

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Opened the meeting on SB2289.

**Representative Robin Weisz:** This is the iPad bill. They came to us and asked for \$160,000 to replace their decrease in federal funding. The state of ND has funded iPad since 2007 at \$500,000. The federal funding did increase up until 2011; which it was froze and then they are now getting a 12% decrease and losing \$163,000 of federal funding. This bill will keep them at the overall funding level. We received a lot of the information. I will stand up in support of this bill because in my mind there is not a question they have data that indicate you are getting anywhere from \$2-\$5 back for every dollar you invest in assisted technology because it is keeping people out of basic care or skilled care.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** They recapture and reuse any of this?

**Rep. Weisz:** Yes absolutely they have various programs. They go to people and show them what is available; show them if they could help them or not; they have rental programs; they sell and have an exchange program where if you needed a bathtub left and the person dies or does end up in the home; that can be given to someone else in exchange. They make better use of their money than we do.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Will the federal change? Is this subject to if the federal money is decreased?

**Rep. Weisz:** They have lost federal money.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Had that change before any discussion?

**Rep. Wiesz:** No we didn't because I think the committee felt based on the success and what they are doing if by some miracle; be able to expand the services; do more for the \$1.3 million than most agencies.



House Appropriations Committee  
SB 2289  
April 3, 2015  
Page 2

Meeting closed.

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
4/8/2015  
Job #25950

- ☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature *Kenneth M. Torkelson*

### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of human services for assistive technology services.

### Minutes:

Chairman Jeff Delzer opened the hearing on SB 2289.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer** discussed the bill. Human Services is providing assistive technology services. Rep. Pollert, did you do anything with this in the budget? It looks like the Feds had been increasing it until 2011, and it's had a slight decrease since then. If I'm not mistaken, the chair of the Human Service Committee was pretty high on this. It is meant to help people stay at home. I think we did have some discussion of the fact that some of the equipment could come back and be re-used. I don't know what's in the budget; I know there used to be money in the budget.

**Representative Pollert:** We did not have the discussion. Actually, this bill probably should be in the DHS budget. We didn't talk about it.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Every time we pass one of these bills out, it goes to conference, and we've got to fight until it's all done. The whole issue should be dealt with in the budget, but that is a big budget; it's pretty easy to oversee it.

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** If you leave it the way it is, there won't be a fight because that's what they put in. Either kill it or don't amend it.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** What are your wishes?

**Rep. Pollert:** I move a Do Pass.

**Rep. Skarphol:** Second.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Discussion by the committee? Seeing none, the clerk will call the roll for a Do Pass on SB 2289.

ROLL CALL VOTE TAKEN. YES: 10 NO: 11 ABSENT: 2

Motion for do pass fails 10-11-2

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Anyone care to make a motion on the other side? If we do put a Do Not Pass on it, I would say this is something that should be looked at in the conference committee on the budget, because it might be a very valid thing to do, to some degree. I'm not sure about the \$160,000, but I also know it'll probably be a little bit of a struggle.

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** The original bill was 500, and they reduced it down in the Senate. Either way, if it passes on the floor, I'll make a Do Not Pass motion on it. If we lose it, it isn't the end of the world because it isn't going to go very far in the Senate.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** It would be done. If it passes on the floor, it would be done at that level. We have a motion for a Do Not Pass.

**Rep. Boehning:** Second.

**Rep. Guggisberg:** They have a center in Fargo, and Rep. Pollert was right. This is all technology-based things that they're using to help people stay in their home. I don't necessarily disagree that it should go into a Human Services budget, though, but I do think that we need to get this. And the \$160,000 is just to replace the Federal funding that they lost. I know this committee doesn't have a huge appetite for that, but this is an investment that helps people stay out of nursing homes and hospitals, and eventually should end up saving money.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Any further discussion on the motion for a Do Not Pass?

ROLL CALL VOTE TAKEN. YES: 12 NO: 10 ABSENT: 1

Motion for a Do NOT Pass carries 12-10-1.

Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich is the carrier.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer** closed the hearing on SB 2289.

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

SB 2289  
4/9/2015  
Job #25976

- ☐ Subcommittee  
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Kenneth M. Torkelson*

### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

"Click here to type reason for introduction of bill/resolution"

### Minutes:

**Chairman Jeff Delzer** opened the hearing on SB 2289.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** One of the things I thought about overnight about the issue: it's the IPAC money. It is a replacement of Federal dollars, which is something we should not do. But the fact of the matter is, it's probably going to be a very close vote on the floor. And one of the things that I'm concerned about is, if we take it to the floor and lose it, and it's part of the 2012, then there's ongoing money; it's not listed as one-time money. So we could reconsider and pass this without; we could put an amendment on it to say it's one-time money and see what happens; it would go to conference or not. Or we could, if we so desired, pass it and then put an amendment on 2015, saying that it's one-time money. I don't want to reconsider 2012 because they'd have to re-write the whole darn thing.

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** If you read that, there basically is a Sunset on it. It's 15-17, so.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** But I think we would want to put that in there anyway, just to reinforce it, and the fact of the matter is, it would make a difference in how it sits for this biennium's discussion of trying to get to the \$200-million on ongoing. But it's up to the committee. We've got a Do Not Pass on it; we could take it to the floor and see what happens. It's not the end of the world doing that.

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** Do you need a motion to bring it back?

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** It we want to do that. We can take it up there and see. Rep. Kempenich, you're listed as the carrier. If you want to take it up and carry it the way it is, that's fine.

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** Talking with Human Services last evening, I think there is a little consternation about the Do Not Pass on it. One of the things is, if you do and you get into arguing on the 2012 budget, it started out at half-a-million dollars and we're sitting

at \$160,000 and that's coming from the Senate. I'm sure it was to keep the bill alive going through the Senate. That's neither here nor there.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Sheila, the 160 came out of the Senate, right? The House did not amend that bill.

**Sheila Sandness, Legislative Council:** That's correct. It has not been amended in the House.

**Rep. Skarphol:** I was on the prevailing side. I would move that we would reconsider our action.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** If there is no objection, we will just consider him to be on the prevailing side. If nobody has a problem with it, that's fine. Well, we will flip them around.

**Rep. Kempenich** moved we reconsider our action whereby we put the Do Not Pass on SB 2289; Seconded by **Rep. Skarphol**. Discussion by the committee?

**Rep. Skarphol:** I think it's a worthwhile program. I really do. I think that this technology helps a lot of people, and we might as well spend the money this way this time, and we can re-evaluate it next time as to how worthwhile it was.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** I also think we should go ahead and do it. I don't know if I can bring myself to vote for the bill in the end. But the fact of the matter is that we should say, you know, what doing this would do, is it does take the conversation out of the conference committee on 2012. In our discussion, it was basically said that we did not go there in 2012, and I can certainly understand that happening. So I think it's OK, but when we do take it to the floor, if we put a Do Pass on it, I think we should go ahead and say that we do not like the idea of all these extra bills that add money to budgets, and they should be part of the budget, but we did not have the conversation, so we went ahead and put the Do Pass on this one because of that. That's one of the reasons why. And the people that voted against it, it's probably because it's replacing Federal money, which the Feds had started, and then stopped; and the state is picking up their share. And further discussion on the motion to reconsider?

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** And that becomes a discussion. It's in our committee, so obviously we can put a carrier, if you want to make a statement, that isn't an issue. But if you don't change it, you know, I'm sure that the Human Services policy committee will pop up and support or disagree with whatever we say.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** I don't think they would have a problem with this section on OMB saying that it's one-time funds.

**Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich:** And if we want to do OMB, and that's probably where it should go because then this is on then.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** The clerk will call the roll for the Reconsideration.

ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN. YES: 18 NO: 3 ABSENT: 2

Vote was 18-3-2. The motion to Reconsider carries.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** We have the bill before us.

**Rep. Skarphol:** I move a Do Pass.

**Rep. Thoreson:** Second.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer:** Is there any discussion? Seeing none, the clerk will call the roll for a Do Pass on SB 2289.

ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN: YES: 17 NO: 4 ABSENT: 2

Motion for a Do Pass carries 17-4-2.

Representative Pollert will carry the bill.

**Chairman Jeff Delzer** closed the hearing on SB 2289.

Date: 4/8/15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

House: Appropriations Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By: Pollert Seconded By: Skarphol

Representatives	Yes	No	Absent
Chairman Jeff Delzer		✓	
Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich		✓	
Representative Bellew		✓	
Representative Brandenburg			—
Representative Boehning		✓	
Representative Dosch		✓	
Representative Kreidt	✓		
Representative Martinson	✓		
Representative Monson		✓	
Representative Nelson	✓		
Representative Pollert	✓		
Representative Sanford	✓		
Representative Schmidt		✓	
Representative Silbernagel	✓		
Representative Skarphol	✓		
Representative Streyle		✓	
Representative Thoreson		✓	
Representative Vigasaa		✓	
Representative Boe		✓	
Representative Glassheim			—
Representative Guggisberg	✓		
Representative Hogan	✓		
Representative Holman	✓		
TOTALS	10	11	2

Motion  
Fails

Floor Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 4/8/15  
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

House: Appropriations Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☐ Do Pass ☒ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By: Kempenich

Seconded By: Boehning

Representatives	Yes	No	Absent
Chairman Jeff Delzer	✓		
Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich	✓		
Representative Bellew	✓		
Representative Brandenburg	✓		
Representative Boehning	✓		
Representative Dosch	✓		
Representative Kreidt		✓	
Representative Martinson		✓	
Representative Monson	✓		
Representative Nelson		✓	
Representative Pollert		✓	
Representative Sanford		✓	
Representative Schmidt	✓		
Representative Silbernagel		✓	
Representative Skarphol		✓	
Representative Streyle	✓		
Representative Thoreson	✓		
Representative Vigesaa	✓		
Representative Boe	✓		
Representative Glassheim			AB
Representative Guggisberg		✓	
Representative Hogan		✓	
Representative Holman		✓	
TOTALS	12	10	1

Motion  
Carries

Floor Assignment: Kempenich

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: 4/9/15  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

House: Appropriations Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☐ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☒ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By: Kempenich Seconded By: Skarphol

Representatives	Yes	No	Absent
Chairman Jeff Delzer	✓		
Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich	✓		
Representative Bellew		✓	
Representative Brandenburg	✓		
Representative Boehning	✓		
Representative Dosch		✓	
Representative Kreidt		✓	
Representative Martinson	✓		
Representative Monson	✓		
Representative Nelson	✓		
Representative Pollert	✓		
Representative Sanford	✓		
Representative Schmidt	✓		
Representative Silbernagel	✓		
Representative Skarphol	✓		
Representative Streyle			AB
Representative Thoreson	✓		
Representative Vigasaa	✓		
Representative Boe			AB
Representative Glassheim	✓		
Representative Guggisberg	✓		
Representative Hogan	✓		
Representative Holman	✓		
TOTALS	18	3	2

Floor Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 4/9/15  
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2289

House: Appropriations Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation  
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations  
☐ Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By: S Karphol

Seconded By: Thoreson

Representatives	Yes	No	Absent
Chairman Jeff Delzer		✓	
Vice Chairman Keith Kempenich	✓		
Representative Bellew		✓	
Representative Brandenburg	✓		
Representative Boehning	✓		
Representative Dosch	✓		
Representative Kreidt		✓	
Representative Martinson	✓		
Representative Monson	✓		
Representative Nelson	✓		
Representative Pollert	✓		
Representative Sanford	✓		
Representative Schmidt	✓		
Representative Silbernagel	✓		
Representative Skarphol	✓		
Representative Streyle			AB
Representative Thoreson	✓		
Representative Vigesaa		✓	
Representative Boe			AB
Representative Glassheim	✓		
Representative Guggisberg	✓		
Representative Hogan	✓		
Representative Holman	✓		
TOTALS	17	4	2

Floor Assignment: Pollert

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent: \_\_\_\_\_

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2289, as engrossed: Appropriations Committee (Rep. Delzer, Chairman)**  
recommends **DO PASS** (17 YEAS, 4 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).  
Engrossed SB 2289 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

**2015 TESTIMONY**

**SB 2289**



Attach#1  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J#22510

Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

Judie Lee, CEO • jlee@ndipat.org • 800.895.4728 • ndipat.org  
Interagency Program for Assistive Technology • 3240 15<sup>th</sup> St. S, Suite B • Fargo, ND 58104

**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 2289 – Related to Assistive Technology Services**  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
**Senator Lee, Chairman**  
**January 26, 2015**

Chairman Lee, and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am **Judie Lee**, Chief Executive Officer for the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology, or IPAT, as is commonly known. I am here today to ask you to support IPAT's additional funding request of \$500,000 for the purpose of supporting and maintaining assistive technology services for the elderly and people with disabilities. The additional funding will be used to offset the 12% decrease in IPAT's overall funding level and to expand the state's capacity to deliver AT services, especially to the Western counties.

**Organization**

IPAT was established in 1993 and has been designated by the Governor as the implementing entity to carry out the statewide comprehensive assistive technology (AT) program in North Dakota as outlined in the federal AT Act of 2004, as amended.

IPAT is a nonprofit corporation that transitioned from state government in 2005. Since 2007, IPAT has operated with a combination of federal AT Act funds and

state general fund appropriations. The state appropriated funding during the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in 2007. IPAT fulfills its mission and leverages additional funding by working with and contracting services on behalf of other agencies and organizations such as: Aging Services; Sprint; and the FCC National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program. IPAT has sustained operations at this funding level since its last appropriation request 8 years ago.

### **Programs and Services**

IPAT delivers assistive technology (AT) services for individuals who have disabilities of all ages and disability types:

- People who have been injured
- People who are impacted by sudden or chronic disease
- People who are experiencing the effects of aging
- People who are born with a disability

IPAT staff is involved with agencies and service systems that support all areas of life: home, school, work, and community.

IPAT's services can be discussed in terms of core services to consumers, and statewide leadership activities:

#### *Core Services*

- Equipment demonstration through sites in Fargo (which includes a unique Home First Showroom) and Bismarck;
- Equipment rental through an extensive lending library;
- Equipment reutilization;
- Equipment funding programs:



- Pedaling for Possibilities (P4P) offers direct assistance to people who are unable to obtain AT through other avenues.
- Assistive Technology Financial Loan Program (ATFL) offers low interest loans and flexible term financing up to \$50,000 for qualifying applicants to purchase needed AT.

#### *Statewide Leadership*

- Awareness of AT through conferences, booths, print materials, website, blogs, newspapers, and public service announcements on TV and radio;
- Technical Assistance (TA) to individuals, agencies and organizations, such as accessible housing organization;
- Training for groups and individuals regarding specific assistive devices and services;
- Collaboration and Coordination with other entities (employment, education, for example).

A complete description of the range, scope and impact of IPAT's services is available in the most recent Biennial Report, which is included in your information packet.

#### **Impact of Services**

I can present many detailed stories and anecdotes that demonstrate the impact of IPAT services on the lives of people with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging. You will hear some of these stories from consumer testimony shortly. In your packet, is an extensive list of short anecdotes presented by consumers from all fifty- three North Dakota counties.

In terms of statewide impact, I can offer the following data from 2012-2014:

- IPAT delivered 522 device demonstrations to 677 people.
- IPAT maintains over 2,000 pieces of AT available to the public for rental (try before you buy).
- IPAT facilitated the exchange of 377 pieces of AT between consumers.
- IPAT assisted 2,373 people through toll-free lines, email, website, social media, blogs, and videoconferences.
- IPAT delivered 45 trainings to 371 participants.

### **Trends**

Several documented trends indicate the increasing demand for AT services in the state, particularly the Western counties:

- Programs that enable seniors to stay at home identify AT as an essential service.
- Many younger seniors are now coming from a technology-driven generation and want to know more about AT options to maintain independence as they age.
- New state initiatives, such as the Autism Waiver, highlight AT services as an essential component.
- IPAT is experiencing increasing demand from programs, such as Older Blind, for high level expertise and technical assistance to evaluate, recommend and deliver increasingly complex AT devices and services.
- And finally, all aspects of IPAT's core services as described are in greater demand, especially in Western North Dakota.



These are exciting trends, which are the result of our state's rapid economic expansion; our community's commitment to supporting the needs of people with disabilities; and everyone's expectation that we can age gracefully and safely at home, close to family and friends.

**Funding**

I will refer the Committee to Table 1, showing IPAT's current and proposed federal-state appropriations.

*Table 1*

2013-2015 Current		2015-2017 DHS Proposed		Increase/Decrease
Federal	\$888,540	Federal	\$724,672	(\$163,868)
State	\$500,000	State	\$500,000	0
Total	\$1,388,540	Total	\$1,224,672	(\$163,868)

This represents a 12 percent decrease in IPAT's overall funding level for the 2015-2017 biennium. A decrease of this significance would necessitate an analysis of priorities in order to bring expenses in line with projected revenue. The most likely impact would be a reduction in overall operating expenses, such as cost of rent to maintain the Home First Showroom, travel to accomplish public awareness, training, and technical assistance activities and potentially personnel to carry out these activities.

IPAT views the AT funding proposal as a two part discussion. The first addresses the need for a hold even level of funding to ensure the continuity of current AT services.

The second addresses the needs and trends identified in earlier testimony. To meet these challenges, IPAT needs to expand its infrastructure (space, operating capacity, and trained staff). Currently, IPAT maintains a 2-person presence in Bismarck that serves the larger counties, such as Burleigh and Ward; rapidly growing counties, such as Stark, Williams, and Mckenzie; and the smaller counties with a rapidly aging demographic. Under this proposal, IPAT would add 2-3 staff, expand space in the Bismarck office, and increase equipment inventory for demonstration and lending activities. This infrastructure is necessary to expand AT services in the Western counties.

Table 2 shows this 2 part funding proposal:

*Table 2*

Proposed State Appropriation for Hold Even Funding and AT Expansion				
Scenario	Salaries/Benefits (2-3 additional staff)	Expanded Office Rent/Utilities	Additional Operating	Total
Hold Even				\$160,000
AT Infrastructure Expansion	\$274,000	\$46,000	\$20,000	\$340,000
				\$500,000

The total state appropriation under this proposal would increase funding by \$500,000. These enhancements will address the changes we have seen in our state's economy, age demographics, as well as our society's continual integration of technology as a means to achieve goals in community living (home), employment, and education. Since its previous request for supplemental funding 8 years ago, IPAT has shown that with modest resources, along with strategic partnerships in the public and private sectors, a growing number of North Dakota citizens can benefit from assistive technology services. This funding increase would maintain and expand the state's capacity to deliver a continuum of AT services continuously across all ND counties.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Judie Lee  
IPAT CEO  
701-365-4728  
[jlee@ndipat.org](mailto:jlee@ndipat.org)  
[www.ndipat.org](http://www.ndipat.org)



Attach#2  
SB2289  
01/26/15  
J#22510



Making anything possible with Assistive Technology



## Helping North Dakotans of All Ages and Abilities Engage in Life

Biennium Report October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2014



More than ever, assistive technology is helping people with disabilities by increasing their involvement in all areas of daily life, whether that be in the community, in the classroom, at work, or while remaining at home. IPAT delivers services so people with disabilities or those experiencing the effects of aging can get the assistive technology they need.

## Who are we?

The Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) is a non-profit organization that brings assistive technology (AT) into the lives of all North Dakotans that need it.

We were designated by the Governor as the implementing entity for the Statewide Assistive Technology Program in 1993. IPAT is governed by a Board of Directors, and receives program guidance through our Consumer Advisory Council, which is made up of individuals and agency staff representing a range of ages, abilities, and geographic regions of the state.

## What do we do?

We deliver services so all state residents can learn about, try and obtain the AT they need to close the gap between ability and disability. The field of assistive technology is our area of expertise, and we keep up with its advances so we can connect North Dakotans to the AT they need to stay involved in the activities of life. IPAT receives federal dollars through the Assistive Technology Act, state funding as appropriated by the State Legislature, and actively seeks other funding sources that fit our mission in delivering AT.

## EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

North Dakotans with disabilities, spouses, parents, and service providers all have options available to explore assistive technology using IPAT's AT device demonstration centers. Our centers in Fargo and Bismarck are vital in introducing the possibility AT holds for increasing involvement, helping individuals make decisions about which AT will meet their needs, and avoiding wasted expenditures on the purchase of the wrong AT.

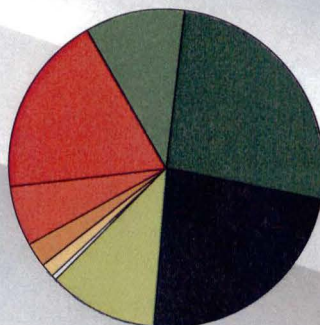
We offer a comprehensive selection of devices in 10 different categories for demonstration, and in this reporting period, 522 device demonstrations were provided to 677 people with 100% of the demonstrations resulting in a decision as to whether or not the AT device would meet the individual with disabilities needs.



## What were people interested in trying?

### Demonstration Participants

Education	62	9%
Employment	69	10%
Health	31	5%
Community Living	515	76%



### Demos by Device Type

137	Hearing
121	Vision
96	Daily Living
59	Speech Communications
54	Computer Related
32	Learning
13	Environmental Adaptations
8	Mobility
2	Recreation
0	Vehicle Modifications



## New Section Added to Fargo Demonstration Center

2.3 P.4



We added a new component to our centers in 2013, the *Home First Showroom*. It is located in Fargo, and features AT devices to do every-day tasks in a simulated home environment to include a kitchen, living room, bathroom, study, dining room and bedroom. You can take a virtual tour by downloading IPAT's Home First Showroom App for the iPad. It can be found at the Apple App Store under "ndipat". Our goal in this newly developed *Showroom* is to help people see the potential AT devices have to ease or erase the difficulties of remaining home by showing them a different way to do things – the use of AT.

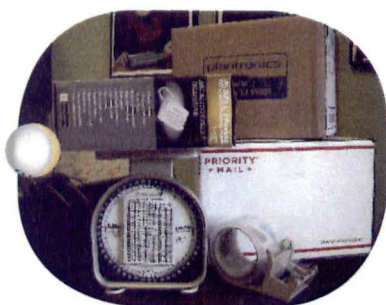
### Welcome Home First Showroom



### AT Demonstration Impacts Woman with Hearing Loss

A woman arrived at IPAT's demonstration center following a recommendation from her audiologist. As an individual born with a significant hearing loss, and aging into an even more significant loss, she was having trouble hearing even the loudest alarm clock, her doorbell and her phone ringing. She explored various options and opted to try an all-in-one signaling system.

She called after a month to say, "I don't know what I would do without this! I sleep so much better because I know the bed-shaker will wake me, and I won't be late for work. This is going to help me stay in my apartment and keep my job, it is a godsend."



### EQUIPMENT RENTAL PROGRAM

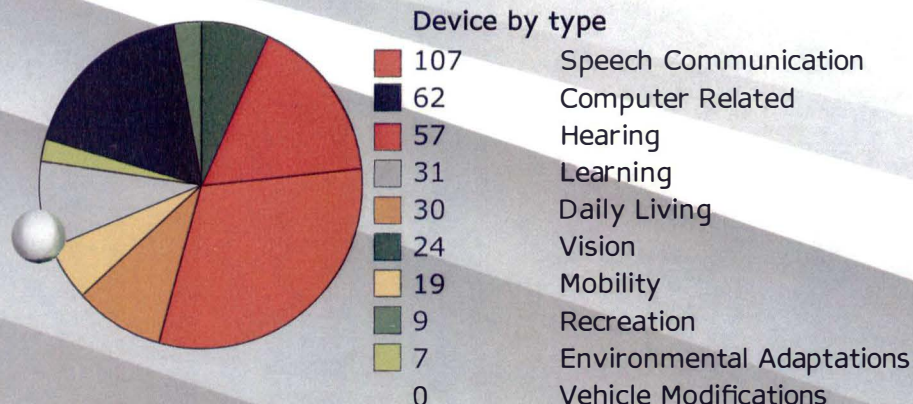
We have over 2,000 pieces of AT equipment to loan out to North Dakotans. They are housed in our Fargo office and available to all state residents. Our main goal in offering this service is to provide an opportunity for people to 'try before they buy'. Equipment loans are for up to six weeks, and include a small rental fee, plus shipping and handling charges.

People with disabilities borrow IPAT's devices to help them decide if they will work for them in the environments they are needed, to replace a device that is in for repair, or to justify a funding request. Professionals borrow our devices for presentations, trainings, or client assessment purposes. IPAT's equipment device loan program helps people make good purchasing decisions, which helps ensure that public and private resources are used wisely.

We are pleased to be able to meet the borrowing needs of state residents through our equipment rental program, and offer a wide range of equipment to help them communicate, see, hear, remember, organize or use a computer. Requested items are delivered directly to the end-user, or may be picked up in our Fargo office.

From 2012-2014, IPAT helped individuals and organizations make correct purchasing decisions or provide funding justification by engaging in a total of 347 equipment rental and renewals statewide. The majority of the borrowers were individuals with disabilities, representatives from education, and representatives from health.

### What was borrowed?





## AT Device Loan Impacts Man's Employment Options

2.4 2005

A working age man with low vision was in need of a way to read documents. He rented a portable digital magnifier from the IPAT Equipment Loan program to use at work for six weeks. The ability to borrow this device, otherwise not available to him without purchase, allowed him to see the documents and text needed on the job. This loan provided a way for him to demonstrate to his employer that he could continue being productive at his present part-time job. This individual later stated that the magnifier could expand his future employment opportunities because of the tasks he was now able to perform.

## AT FUNDING PROGRAMS

IPAT administers 2 different types of AT funding programs. One provides grants to individuals and the other is a financial loan program.



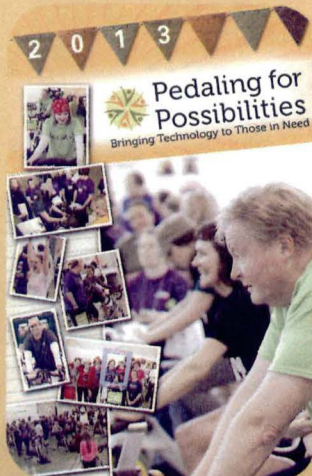
### GRANT PROGRAM:

#### PEDALING FOR POSSIBILITIES

IPAT hosts an annual stationary bike team event in Fargo, called *Pedaling for Possibilities (P4P)*. This event is for the exclusive purpose of raising money to purchase AT devices and services for people unable to obtain them through other avenues.

To make this happen, IPAT works with community businesses to donate funds or in-kind services, and helps interested parties form bike teams to raise money and ride on event day. The funds generated are made available to purchase AT for individuals through an application and panel review process 3 times per year. Funds from other organizations can also be leveraged to combine with the P4P awards when appropriate. The P4P funding awards are treated as grants with no expectation of repayment. Through this annual event, we make AT possibilities for eligible applicants a reality.

To date this event has raised \$93,000 which has been used to purchase AT devices for 86 North Dakotans living in 31 counties. During this reporting period, 46 people with disabilities were helped with funds totaling \$47,732 to purchase AT specific to their individual needs.



IPAT partners with Alerus Financial to administer the Assistive Technology Financial Loan (ATFL) program. It offers the people of North Dakota a financing option to help bridge the gap between resources and the funds needed to purchase assistive technology devices and services. Participants can borrow between \$500 and \$50,000 with flexible terms, and low-interest rates. When needed, help is offered in device selection, and we will work with parties for whom payment is problematic.

During this reporting period, the ATFL program has \$14,727.88 on loan to individuals in North Dakota to purchase AT.

### AT Funding Grant Impacts Individual with MS

A woman with advanced Multiple Sclerosis, who suddenly lost the use of her hands, contacted IPAT for help in determining a way to continue to control a computer and obtain a funding source to pay for it. A computer was one of the only ways she had left to connect with the world around her, and one of the few ways she could still be independent.



IPAT assessed her needs, and loaned AT equipment to help her determine the appropriate computer access technology. After decisions were made on the best assistive technology solutions for her needs, the woman worked with IPAT's Pedaling for Possibilities program and the Multiple Sclerosis Society to fund the needed equipment. With the help of both entities, the following was purchased; a computer, large monitor, voice recognition software, a high quality headset, and training

She later wrote an article using the equipment she received. In it she stated, "This equipment makes me feel like I can regain some of my life again, and it is quite an amazing feeling! This gift allows me to communicate in many ways, gain new knowledge through libraries and books, stimulate my mind through brain teasers, travel all over the world via Google, pay bills, and lets me listen to music from Gangnam Style to Sinatra. P4P - this is humanity at its finest!"





## DEVICE REUTILIZATION PROGRAM North Dakota AT4ALL

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IPAT has a program that helps to link used assistive technology devices to North Dakotans with disabilities that need them. It is a web-based equipment reutilization service called AT4ALL. It consists of a comprehensive online database that makes the reutilization of used equipment simpler and more efficient for everyone.

AT4ALL offers three distinct services; it lets any state resident list their used AT equipment for sale, trade or donation, it provides a venue for those looking for used AT to search for what is available, and it lets AT users place ads for items they are looking

for. IPAT administers the site, which also incorporates the listings of other state re-use program partners. This combined effort has made device reutilization a well-organized, one-stop site for everyone to easily participate in AT re-use.

During this reporting period, 377 pieces of equipment were exchanged, saving consumers a total of \$80,260 when compared to buying the equipment new.

### AT Reutilization Impacts a ND Veteran

A North Dakota veteran's residential health care representative (RHCR) contacted IPAT to help her with an elderly client with low vision and tremors who wanted to use a computer to send emails and access the internet. These age related impairments were making it difficult for him to successfully use a standard keyboard and monitor. Through IPAT, the RHCR learned about different AT options, and chose to try an alternative keyboard with 1-inch keys and reduced keyset, paired with the computer's built-in accessibility features of sticky-keys, filter keys, and on-screen magnification for her client.

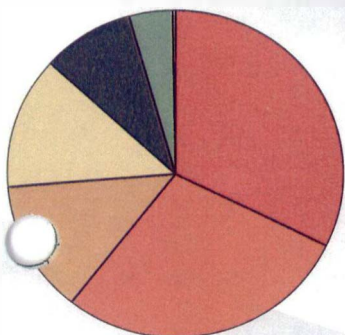
The solution was a good fit, but with a limited fixed income and no funding source available to purchase the AT, the veteran still could not make using the keyboard a reality. Fortunately, IPAT's re-use program, AT4ALL had several keyboards available that had the potential to meet the veteran's needs. This was brought to the attention of the RHCR who then searched AT4ALL's online listings. She located a keyboard with the features needed; larger keys, simplified alphabetic keyboard, and built-in mouse. The used alternative keyboard listed on AT4ALL was affordable, and the other needed accommodations were enabled via the built-in computer accessibility options at no cost. Due to IPAT's reutilization program and staff expertise, this veteran is now spending his time emailing and surfing the internet because he was able to get the AT he needed.

### ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

IPAT provides direct services to help individuals, family members and agency staff improve AT outcomes, services, management and/or policies. We helped 2,372 people address their AT concerns through the use of our toll-free lines, email, website, blog and videoconferencing services. Our most frequent seeker of IPAT expertise is an individual with disabilities looking for a solution to a specific problem followed by their family members or representatives.



### Who called?



764	Individuals
672	Family/Reps
307	Health
307	Community
210	Education
100	Employment
2	Technology

### PUBLIC AWARENESS and INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Newsletter Recipients	19,460
Blog Subscribers	161
Blog Visitors	65,912
Website Visitors	65,934

We also present and exhibit at conferences and workshops statewide to help get the word out about the power of AT and the services of IPAT. We participated in 228 events attended by 11,432 people during this reporting period.



## AT Awareness Impacts Large Viewing Audience

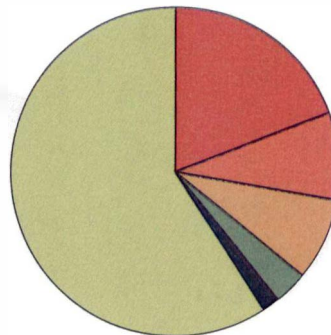
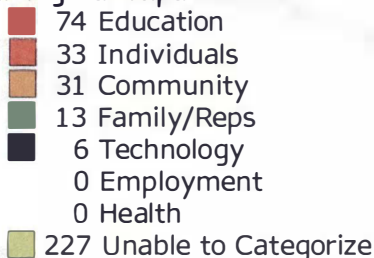
During this reporting period, IPAT was fortunate to forge a relationship with Marci Narum, the host of KXMB's televised *Noon Show*, which airs throughout southwestern North Dakota. We completed a series of seven interviews highlighting assistive technology for vision loss, traumatic brain injury, speech, emergency preparedness, daily living, computers, and aging at home. The show reaches an audience of 7,000 and if not caught live, episodes archived on the KX website for over a year.

## AT TRAINING

We provide training for individuals as well as large and small groups. Typically, individual training is centered on how to use a specific assistive technology device or software program, whereas group training tends to be customized to the end-user. Our staff provides training in the environment that best suits the training needs and audience, whether that is onsite, or offsite through videoconferencing or webinar delivery. We delivered 45 trainings to 371 participants that included individuals with disabilities, parent groups, service providers and other interested community members.



### Training Participants



## AT Training Helps Elderly with Mobile Tablet Use

Over the last year, an IPAT staff member worked with a local apartment complex for seniors, to provide 6 training sessions to 35 residents. Each participant owned their own tablet, and with the guidance of IPAT, learned to operate and use it with less trepidation. The training provided an introduction to the pre-loaded apps; practice changing the settings to increase font size, change background color, zoom, and use text-to-speech; opportunities to use the tablet to communicate via email, instant messaging and Skype; a chance to set it up as an organizational tool to track appointments, take medications, and create daily schedules; and specific training on how to access the internet for general information, to locate new apps, and how to download them.

By reaching out to those experiencing the effects of aging, IPAT has helped this group become more comfortable using technology. This familiarity will be of benefit when their abilities change. By learning the technology now, they will be ready to use specialized AT apps for memory, vision, hearing or communication losses. They will stay engaged and independent longer, which is of benefit to all.

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY STATEWIDE RESOURCE

North Dakota's investment in IPAT's infrastructure makes it possible for us to deliver quality AT related services to state and private entities in a cost effective manner. Our infrastructure can be used by all people in ND which reduces the duplication of services and increases collaboration. We support entities such as human service providers, education, employers, and healthcare providers in their decision making process through their use of our equipment loan library, demonstration centers, and by accessing our AT expertise. The results are more appropriate and cost effective AT purchases.

During this reporting period we have delivered the following services for Federal, State, & Private Entities:

- Assistive Safety Device Distribution Service
- Research Alliance for Accessible Voting
- Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Service
- Fee for Service Provision
- National Deaf Blind Equipment Distribution Service
- Sprint

IPAT's dedicated focus on assistive technology, our continuum of AT services, coupled with knowledgeable and experienced staff, make us the go-to resource to carry out AT related activities.

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

Attach #3  
SB2289  
01/26/15  
J# 22510

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Bob Puyear. I serve on IPAT's Board of Directors, and on IPAT's Consumer Advisory Council. More importantly, I am a husband, living at home with my wife Shirley. Due to her foresight, and the help of assistive technology devices I am able to remain in my home, and that is why I am here today to ask for your support of Senate Bill 2289.

I would like to see other North Dakotans experiencing the effects of aging as well as those of us with disabilities remain at home with assistive technology. IPAT knows how to help people do that through their Home First Showroom. I would like to allot my remaining testimony time to Peggy Shireley from IPAT to take the committee on a virtual tour of the Home First Showroom.

Robert Puyear  
305 Remington Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-224-8474

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

Attam #4  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J#22510

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Denise Arntson. I work for American Bank Center. I have also been involved with the non-profit organization Rebuilding Together Greater Bismarck Mandan since 1997. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 to provide assistive technology services for the elderly and people with disabilities provided by IPAT.

It has been my privilege to serve in various capacities with Rebuilding Together, whose goal is to keep low income homeowners at home safely. Peggy Shireley, Senior AT Consultant for IPAT has been a partner in this work.

When we visit with homeowners about their needs, their responses generally start with something like: I no longer use the shower because I can't step into the bathtub; or I don't lock my doors because it is too painful with my arthritis. We look to IPAT to work with these homeowners, and they find solutions we have no idea exist, like adding an over the tub safety rail, or installing remote control door locks. IPAT consistently provides information and tools to help people remain independent.

On a more personal level, my great-aunt Alice, a person I describe as a courageous survivor following a stroke at 50, needed a leg brace and cane. Nearing 90, she considered moving out of her home. In assessing options, the facility with self-closing apartment doors was immediately eliminated – as someone who moved slowly, that automatic door could knock her right over. During a conversation with

Peggy, I learned about electric door openers that individuals can control for homes and apartments. Who knew!!! This technology could literally open doors and options for Alice.

My mom is 85 years old and lives in her own home across the state. She mentioned that she wanted to make potato salad but couldn't until someone stopped by to open her new jar of mayonnaise. In an IPAT newsletter I read about a device used to open jars. I ordered one for her. Opening a jar may not seem life-changing . . . but it certainly affects the quality of your life when you no longer plan your menu based on types of food containers.

IPAT provides options. The assistance that IPAT offers allows people to remain safe as they navigate through life; it allows them to continue to take an active role in their personal care and to maintain that can-do attitude so prevalent in North Dakota.

IPAT is a source of information and equipment - - - but mostly it is a source of hope and dignity. None of us likes to be a burden on others. What a gift IPAT gives to our North Dakota friends and family.

I would like to ask each of you for your support for SB 2289 and I thank you for your time.

Denise Arntson  
1223 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-400-0135

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill SB 2289  
January 26, 2015

Attach# 5  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J#22510

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Betty Cariveau. I am a Bismarck homemaker who just celebrated my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. I am here today to support Senate Bill 2289 requesting funding for the support of assistive technology services for those that are aging and disabled.

I live alone in my own home and I want to stay there as long as I can. As a person who is deaf, IPAT has helped me to realize that dream. They did that by helping me find a phone that I could use that amplifies sound loud enough so I can hear it. This phone was a life-saver, it allowed me to care for my husband who had severe disabilities, because I could call for an ambulance when he needed immediate care. When he was hospitalized the nurses could also call me when my presence was needed at the hospital. I don't know what I would have done without it.

The technology on my phone has also allowed me to continue to live alone, it is my lifeline to friends and family. Without it I would be so isolated, but with it I am never alone. I can get help when I need it. There are many people just like me that need IPAT to help them find the devices that will work for them. IPAT has always served me well, and without them, where would I go. They are a big plus.

Thank you very much.

Betty Cariveau  
1420 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND  
701-223-4479



Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

Attach #6  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J# 22510

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Mary Rebenitsch, a retired home care nurse. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

For a number of years, IPAT has been one of my best resources in providing home safety for seniors living alone. It has provided safety alert systems that are simple to operate, an immediate call to family and friends in an emergency, not charging a burdensome monthly cost to elders on a fixed income. It has provided secure medication dispensers with a lock to prevent overdose and alarm to remind the forgetful to take their medications, saving man hours and preventing accidental overdoses.

It has provided hearing and vision assisted phones to the visually and hearing impaired, with large numbers, lights and readouts of incoming calls, plus adjustable volume past what is readily available. One forgetful, 92 year-old, both hearing and vision impaired, with whom I communicate regularly on her IPAT phone, answers an incoming call with, "Just a minute while I push the

6.2

blue button." That blue button gives her a volume boost that makes communication possible.

None of these systems are available in the commercial market in the economical form that IPAT provides. Many of the people in my personal experience who receive services from IPAT would not be able to afford what they hear advertised on TV, nor would they be able to do the shopping needed, so these, plus many other devices that IPAT provides, allow seniors to stay in their homes independently. They would otherwise need a higher level of care at much more cost to the state.

Thank you for hearing my request for support of SB2289, asking for a little money to save a lot.

Mary Rebenitsch  
105 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Mandan, ND 58554  
701-667-1923

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

SB 2289  
Attach#7  
01/26/15  
J#22510

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Michael Keller, a person with disabilities. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those who are aging and people with disabilities.

I am here this morning because this bill is important to me. More specifically, IPAT is important to me. My story is a little bit different, actually a lot different from many that you will hear today. I was not born with a disability nor have I lived most of my life disabled. When I was 49 years old, just over six years ago, I suffered a stroke while at work in Grand Forks. Since then my right arm, hand and fingers quit working properly. I cannot bend my fingers and have limited strength in my right hand and arm. I have significant balance and other issues as well. As a result, I have not been able to work full time since January 7, 2009 or at all since February 2010.

After trying occupational and hand therapy, more than 15 medications, acupuncture, pain injections and an experimental brain surgery and clinical trial at Cleveland Clinic, my condition has not improved. I am still right handed; but my right hand does not work. I have lost my fine motor skills and am in constant pain.

In April 2014, my rehabilitation counselor at Vocational Rehabilitation referred me to IPAT for an assistive technology assessment – two terms I had not heard of before. I met Peggy at IPAT's AT device demonstration center here in Bismarck. During my



assessment, I was able to try a number of AT options for computer access, ergonomics and worksite accommodations, including note taking and telephone usage.

IPAT's demonstration center afforded me the opportunity to explore a variety of non-traditional devices that I would not have otherwise known about. The assessment report prepared for me by IPAT gives me greater confidence with prospective employers when I am trying to re-enter the work force. Without the services of IPAT and its' AT device demonstration center, I would be less comfortable discussing my abilities while looking for a job.

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I would appreciate your support for SB 2289. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Michael Keller  
827 N 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-215-1513

House Human Services  
January 21, 2015  
SB 2289

Testimony by Denise Harvey  
Protection and Advocacy Project

Attach #8  
SB2289  
01/26/15  
J#22510

P&A supports the funding provided to IPAT-Interagency Program for Assistive Technology to provide services and supports to meet the Assistive Technology needs of individuals with disabilities. Assistive Technology plays a critical role for people with disabilities in creating and maintaining independence in all aspect of their life, to include where people live, work and play. This also ensures that people with disabilities can remain living independently and working in their community. IPAT provides an essential service in the state by providing evaluations, assistive technology loaning and expertise regarding meeting the AT needs of North Dakota citizens. P&A has seen these services greatly benefit individuals with varying types of disabilities, in all age ranges, and in a wide variety of settings.



**University of Mary**  
*America's Leadership University*

*Program in Physical Therapy*

*Letter #9  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J #22510*

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, as Director of the University of Mary's Program in Physical Therapy Program, I am writing to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

I am in support of funding assistive technology services for 2 main reasons. First, the ND Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) has been highly supportive and collaborative in the education of our physical therapy students. It is imperative that our students recognize the valuable services IPAT provides to assist people with disabilities and the aging population with functional and community mobility and the ability to stay in their homes. Our students learn first-hand what is available, how to access, and then apply in clinical situations.

Secondly, and more importantly, as a healthcare provider for both people with disabilities and aging adults, I have witnessed first-hand the incredible value of assistive technology in assisting people with employment, active participation in education and in the community, and in the ability to be safe in their homes. IPAT is able to provide high and low tech assistive devices such as computer access and power mobility, to assistive technology services such as coordination of services and evaluation of individual needs. Without these services, many individuals would not be safe living in their homes, would not be active and participative community members, and would not be financially independent as they would not gain employment.

Therefore, I strongly support passage of SB 2289 to fund assistive technology services. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Dockter, PT, PhD  
Fellow of the APTA Education Leadership Institute  
Professor and Chair, Department of Physical Therapy  
University of Mary  
Bismarck, ND 58504

Attach #10  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J# 22510

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, My name is Eugenie Lang. I am a retired registered nurse. I ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

Please let me tell you what IPAT has done for me. In 2009 I was diagnosed with a pituitary tumor. The pituitary gland is located at the base of the brain and next to several very important structures. My tumor grew so fast that my optic nerves sustained permanent damage, leaving me legally blind. The tumor was removed, but the impact to my life has continued on and on. Since I had never needed services before, I did not know what was available to help me. IPAT showed me ways to continue to read, to read medication labels, to determine the time, to read food labels and many more things. IPAT has allowed me to feel safe in my own home. The most important technology I learned about was a new voting machine. I helped test this new product, a voting machine which I could use without any other assistance. This machine helped me to vote, and once my vote was complete it helped me by filling in the little ovals – a task many voters take for granted, but is something which is not attainable for an individual who is legally blind. IPAT literally changed my life.

I ask you to support SB2289 and help many North Dakota Citizens to remain productive members of society. Thank you for your time and I am sorry that I was not able to be here in person to tell you how important IPAT is to the citizens of this state.

Eugenie Lang  
709 West Interstate Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58803  
701-751-1101

Eugenie Lang



**University of Mary**  
*America's Leadership University*

DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Attach #11  
SB 2289  
01/26/15  
J# 22510

Senate Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
January 26, 2015

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

I am Dr. Carol Olson, an Associate Professor in the Occupational Therapy education program at the University of Mary. I would like to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those who are aging and people with disabilities.

The North Dakota Interagency Project for Assistive Technology (NDIPAT) has been extremely instrumental in my efforts to teach future occupational therapists and educators about assistive technology (AT). I have been having my students visit the IPAT center in Bismarck for the past 16 years to hear about the services and to explore some of the available technology. Here, they have been able to hear about the services provided by this organization (Assistive Technology demonstration center for individuals to see various types of technology available for persons with disabilities; AT swap shop to reuse/redistribute equipment that is no longer needed by one person, and try to get it to someone who does need it; assistance in accessing funding for various AT needs, and a rental/trial system for persons to try equipment before expending significant funds to purchase something that may not work). After graduation, these students are then able to share this information and resource with their colleagues and clients.

I have also used this service personally to identifying appropriate equipment to help my father live more independently and with a higher quality of life. We were able to explore various hearing amplification systems, telephones, and magnification systems to compensate for his macular degeneration and hearing loss.

These services are extremely important, and may not be available elsewhere. And although expensive, putting finances towards this type of project could actually save the state, insurance companies, and individuals money in not purchasing something that may not work for the individual or by forcing people to move out of their own homes and to a nursing home where they would have the needed assistance. These services are not currently available elsewhere, so it is very important to continue funding NDIPAT.

I ask that you approve SB 2289 and allow this valuable service to continue in our state. Thank you.

Carol Olson, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA  
Department of Occupational Therapy  
University of Mary  
7500 University Dr.  
Bismarck, ND 58504



Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

Attach #12  
SB2289  
01/26/15  
V#22510

**Helping North Dakotans of All Ages and Abilities Engage in Life**

**County With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

Adams	an 86 year old woman with congestive heart failure and macular degeneration can now go down her basement to do her laundry using a stair lift
Barnes	an 85 year old woman with macular degeneration is able to see the numbers on her phone to dial independently using a talking phone with large buttons
Benson	a Fort Totten elder is able to safely navigate her home and go out in the community using her new wheelchair, as her old wheelchair was falling apart and not safe to use
Billings	a senior who uses a walker is able to transport items around his home on his walker tray, enabling him to be more independent
Bottineau	a 63 year old woman with MS was able to get training on Dragon Naturally Speaking (voice activated software) so she is now able to operate her computer
Bowman	a 92 year old POW, who wants to stay in the home he built after coming home from 5 years of war and a POW camp, is now able to live independently, as he is able to get up out of chairs, be safe at home with a life alert, and is independent in dressing himself.
Burke	a 71 year old woman with right side paralysis is able to continue living independently at home using her manual wheelchair
Burleigh	a 77 year old woman with severe back issues is now able to load her scooter herself to get to appointments with a vehicle lift ramp
Cass	a 50 year old woman with carpal tunnel syndrome and multiple repetitive stress injuries, working with Vocational Rehabilitation, visited the IPAT demo center for an AT assessment focusing on office ergonomics and computer access. The solutions found enabled the woman to return to a full time position in an office setting.
Cavalier	a 44 year old man with MS is now able to stand from a seated position without assistance with the help of his lift chair
Dickey	a 23 year old woman with Down Syndrome and a speech impairment is able to communicate with others and helps to cook, takes her medications, and remembers daily chores and events with her iPad and various apps



Divide	my grandma is now able to ambulate in her own home and remain there safely using a Rollator. Without this device, she would not have the means to remain in her home and would be at high risk for falls.
Dunn	an individual who is deaf is able to hear his smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector when the alarm goes off with the use of an adapted flashing alarm system
Eddy	a 92 year old woman is now able to reposition herself in bed and/or pull herself to a seated position with the use of bed cane
Emmons	a 46 year old woman with MS is now able to independently control her TV, fan, lights, etc., with a Voice IR remote control, thereby removing the need to call on nursing home staff
Foster	a lady is able to take her medication regularly keeping her out of a hospital/nursing home using a medication dispenser specific to her needs
Golden Valley	a lady is able to feed herself and live independently with the use of adapted dinnerware and a clip to attach the utensils to her hand
Grand Forks	a 60 year old architect with a sudden hearing loss visited the IPAT demo center to look for solutions to help him communicate with his coworkers and colleagues. An iPad with an app that features a keyboard and voice dictation allows him to understand the person he is talking with almost instantaneously.
Grant	a 76 year old man is able live at home independently using tools to help with medication to ensure he is taking his meds as ordered by his doctor
Griggs	and various pieces of equipment, a senior is able to stay in her home safely and independently
Hettinger	a consumer is able to sit safely in her wheelchair with the use of a tray table, which also allows her to read the paper and crochet
Kidder	a senior is able to live safely in his home with the possibility to call for help, if needed, with the use of a Guardian Alert 911
LaMoure	an 84 year old woman is able to stay in her home and be self-sufficient using the equipment which enables her to bathe independently
Logan	a 57 year old woman with epilepsy and diabetes is able to get up on her own with her lift chair
McHenry	a 3 year old boy with a speech disorder is able to talk with his teachers and peers, express himself, and make his wants and needs known at home with an iPad and communication app
McIntosh	a man with a severe hearing impairment and dementia is now able to get in/out of his bed by himself and safely bathe, allowing him to stay in his home with his wife

McKenzie	a lady is able to stay in her home safely, with peace of mind for her family, using the Freedom Alert system
McLean	an 84 year old man still living on the farm can now rest easy knowing he has a medical alert system to notify family and friends in case of emergency
Mercer	a 72 year old man is very proud to be able to live independently as a stroke left him without the use of his right arm and he is now able to open a can to prepare his own meal without assistance
Morton	a 61 year old man who is legally blind is now able to read his medication bottles, mail, newspapers, and food labels with the Eye Pal Ace
Mountrail	a 48 year old woman who has lost fine motor skills due to several disabilities can now communicate effectively and use the Internet using her iPad
Nelson	a 95 year old woman with a hearing loss is now able to hear her family when they visit and engage in conversations in the commons area of her apartment building with her hearing aids
Oliver	a 70 year old man is able to access his home and bathe independently using his cane and bath chair
Pembina	a 58 year old woman who is legally blind can now read her recipes, pay bills, read mail, etc. with her SARA-SE and she can use her pen friend to help label food products, medicines, etc.
Pierce	a 29 year old man with a traumatic brain injury can use his unlocked SmartPhone, Otterbox, and Tec Communication Tiles to remind himself of events throughout the day so he can become more independent
Ramsey	a consumer using a walker is able to transport items safely, like food from the counter to the table using a walker tray
Ransom	an 85 year old woman is able to walk to the local senior center for daily meals using her Rollator
Renville	a 71 year old woman with a head injury is now using a new bath lift
Richland	a 57 year old woman with MS is able to embroider, read, etc. with the use of a magnifying floor lamp
Rolette	a 63 year old woman with a visual impairment received an updated computer through IPAT's AT4ALL equipment and is now able to use the Internet, conduct her own business without relying on others, and help her with her volunteer work.
Sargent	a senior with a vision impairment is able to read his paper, magazine, and other printed matter and write his checks using magnifiers



12.4

Sheridan	a 48 year old woman with expressive language disabilities and minimal speech, is now able to type, write, or draw her ideas, and to speak her ideas aloud using an iPad with various apps
Sioux	a resident of Sioux County is able to live and bathe independently and safely using her new equipment
Slope	a senior is able to live in her home safely, knowing she has a Freedom Alert to let friends and family know if she needs assistance
Stark	a 50 year old woman with MS is now able to remain driving and keeping her independence with hand controls for her vehicle
Steele	an 89 year old woman with a hearing impairment is able to communicate with her family and friends thanks to an amplified telephone, enabling her to remain in her home and keep quality of life
Stutsman	a 46 year old woman who is deaf is now notified visually when doorbells sound, phones ring, or fire alarms blast, and keep her sons safe with an AlertMaster Notification System
Towner	a 66 year old woman who is deaf-blind due to Usher's Syndrome now uses a computer with a large monitor, large keyboard, and Skype to listen and lip read so she can communicate with friends and family
Trail	a middle school aged boy with Autism and ADHD visited the IPAT demo center looking for solutions for taking notes during class. An iPad with a Bluetooth keyboard and note taking app that records the teacher's voice during lecture allowed him to take notes during class and go back and listen to the teacher's recording to fill in his notes if he missed something.
Walsh	a 56 year old woman who is deaf is now able to call for help in an emergency, notify her if someone is at the door, and alert her in case of a fire using a Sidekick Receiver w/ strobe
Ward	siblings ages 1, 3, and 5 with hearing impairments are now able to communicate and access information with a family FM system
Wells	a 24 year old man with CIPD has increased independence at home, is able to access the bus without help, and lessens the safety risks for himself and his caregivers with a stairway chair-lift
Williams	a 56 year old woman who is legally blind can now read or have media of all sorts (food labels, medicine bottles, bills, etc.) read to her with a portable magnifier and ID Mate Barcode Reader, all to help her maintain her independence

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES



### Home First Services

Let IPAT help you focus on one important, but often overlooked way to make your home workable as abilities change - assistive technology!

- Visit our Home First Showroom in Fargo to determine which AT devices may help you remain home safely
- Go to the App Store and search for the "NDiPat" app. Download IPAT's Home First Showroom app for the iPad, then explore AT devices through our app's virtual tour
- Contact us to discuss an onsite AT assessment for your home

## CONTRACTED SERVICES



With our organization's dedicated focus on assistive technology and staff's AT expertise, state and private entities contract with us to deliver AT-related services in a cost-effective manner.

### Examples of IPAT contracted services:

- Statewide assistive safety device distribution service for residents 60 years and older;
- ND's free, specialized telecommunications equipment programs;
- AT assessments;
- AT trainings for individuals, non-profit organizations, private entities, and state agencies

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IS...



Devices . . . "to include any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities."

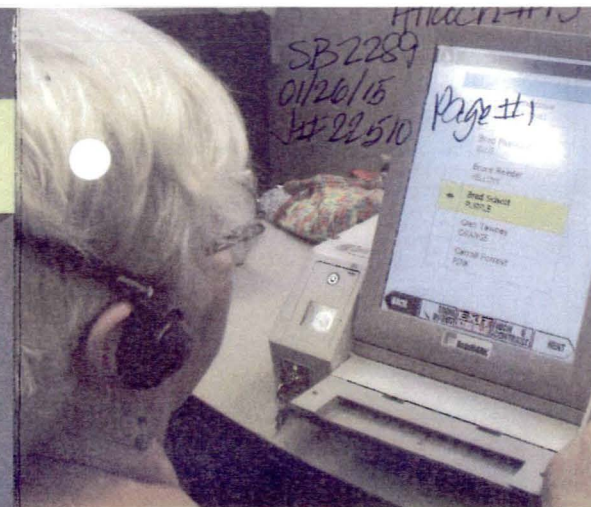
**Think:** iPads with apps to help individuals with disabilities communicate, see, organize, read and/or learn; personal amplification systems; text-to-speech or voice recognition software for a computer; automated medication dispensers; and hand controls for a vehicle.

Services . . . "any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device."

**Think:** AT assessment, help in purchasing, designing products, leasing devices, coordinating therapies, and AT training for individuals, family members, and professionals.

Remember, IPAT provides direct AT problem-solving services to help individuals, family members and professional staff improve:

- AT outcomes
- AT services
- AT management
- AT policy



# IPAT

Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

IPAT delivers a range of services so people with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging can get the assistive technology they need in the classroom, the community, at work, and to remain at home.

Connect with us to get help with your AT service needs:

- Toll-free line (800) 895-4728
- Email [ipatinfo@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatinfo@ndipat.org)
- Website [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org)
- Blog [ndipat.org/blog](http://ndipat.org/blog)
- Facebook IPAT North Dakota Assistive Technology





## WHO ARE WE?

The Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) is a non-profit organization that brings assistive technology (AT) into the lives of all North Dakotans that need it. We were designated by the Governor as the implementing entity for the Statewide Assistive Technology Program in 1993. IPAT is governed by a Board of Directors, and provided program guidance through our Consumer Advisory Council, which is made up of individuals and agency staff representing a range of ages, abilities, and geographic regions of the state.

### What do we do?

We deliver services so all state residents can learn about, try and get the AT devices they need to close the gap between ability and disability. Our passion is assistive technology, and we keep current on the latest advances in the field so we can connect people to the AT devices or services appropriate to their needs. IPAT receives federal dollars through the Assistive

Technology Act, state funding as appropriated by the ND State Legislature, and actively seeks other funding sources that fit our mission.

IPAT is unique in that we are the only program in the state helping people of all ages and abilities use AT to do what they want to do, where and when they want to do it. We are looked to as the primary AT resource in the state because we have the expertise to consistently provide comprehensive, quality AT services.

### What can we do for you?

- Answer your AT questions
- Assess your AT needs
- Deliver AT training per requests
- Set-up an AT display at your event
- Blog about AT topics you suggest
- Serve on your AT related boards or committees
- Help you sort out AT funding options



# IPAT

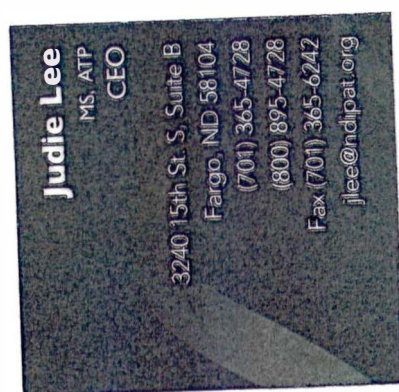
Making anything possible with Assistive

# IPAT



13.3

[www.ndipat.org](http://www.ndipat.org)



13.4

Download IPAT's  
Home First Showroom  
App for iPad free!



Search for "NDiPat" on  
the Apple App Store.





## CONTACT IPAT

13.5

### Fargo Office

3240 15th Street South, Suite B

Fargo, ND 58104

Local: (701) 365-4728

Toll Free: (800) 895-4728

Fax: (701) 365-6242

### Bismarck Office

400 East Broadway Ave, Suite 501

Bismarck, ND 58501

Local: (701) 258-4728

Toll Free: (888) 540-4728

Fax: (701) 258-7474

[ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org) • [ipatinfo@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatinfo@ndipat.org)

## CONTACT IPAT

Call - (800) 895-4728

13.6

. . . . . to begin closing the gap between ability and disability for yourself or someone you care about by discussing potential assistive technology solutions with IPAT staff.

Visit our website - [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org)

. . . . . to learn about our services, list or locate a piece of used AT equipment, read our blog posts, or donate to Pedaling for Possibilities.

Email - [ipatinfo@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatinfo@ndipat.org)

. . . . . to inquire about borrowing AT devices, ask for help solving an AT problem, or request that an IPAT staff member contact you.

Go to our Facebook page -  
IPAT North Dakota Assistive  
Technology

. . . . . to find out more about assistive technology, leave a comment, or stay up-to-date with IPAT activities.

Check out our Blog - [ndipat/blog](http://ndipat/blog)

. . . . . to learn about a wide range of AT topics, engage in AT conversations, or suggest content that you would like to see us post.

13.7  
FINANCIAL LOAN PROGRAM



Providing a financing option for the  
purchase of assistive technology  
(800) 895-4728 • [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org)



## 13.8 FINANCIAL LOAN PROGRAM

The Assistive Technology Financial Loan (ATFL) program offers the people of North Dakota a financing option to help bridge the gap between resources and the funds needed to purchase assistive technology devices and services.

### Who can apply?

- You must be a person with a disability, a family member, or approved representative of a person with a disability,
- You need to demonstrate the ability to repay a loan, and
- The end-user of the AT loan applied for must be a North Dakota resident.

### What does it offer?

- iPAT consultant expertise in device selection
- Low-interest loans to make getting AT easier for people with disabilities
- Loans typically at 2% above money market savings
- Help in working with you if payments are problematic

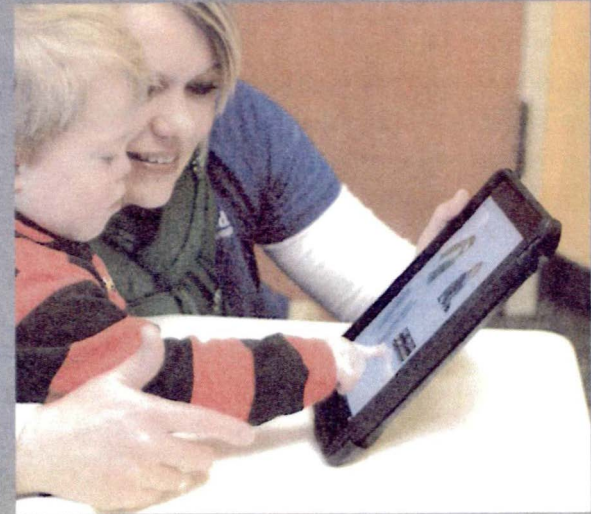
### Loan Information:

- Minimum \$500 – Maximum \$50,000
- Terms can be flexible
- Loans held by Alerus Financial

### Examples of what can be purchased:

- Communication systems
- Hearing aids and assistive listening devices
- Assessments
- Home modifications
- Computers and disability related software
- Equipment repair and warranties
- Manual or motorized wheelchairs and scooters
- Training to use the AT purchased
- Adapted Vehicles
- Low vision devices

## FUNDING PROGRAM 13.9



## Pedaling for Possibilities

Pedaling for Possibilities is IPAT's annual stationary bike team event. Its sole purpose is to raise money to purchase assistive technology for people with disabilities who are not able to obtain it through other funding avenues.

### Who is eligible for funds?

Residents of North Dakota and Moorhead, MN who:

- Have a clearly established need for AT,
- Have needs not met by other funding programs, and
- Meet the financial eligibility criteria set forth on the application.

## FUNDING PROGRAM 13.10

### Requesting Funds

Download and complete the Pedaling for Possibilities Application found at [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org) or request an application by calling (800) 895-4728.

### Disbursing Funds

- There is no cap set on individual awards, but it is expected that award requests will not exceed \$2,000
- AT funds awarded will be made directly to the device or service vendor
- Awarded funds are considered grants and are not expected to be paid back
- Individuals are eligible for only one award during a twelve-month period
- Funds can be used in partnership with private or public funds to close the gap in AT device/service costs

### What can be purchased?

A wide range of AT devices and services to include but not be limited to:

Communication devices, home modifications, vision equipment, vehicle modifications, computer access hardware/software, scooters, hearing aids, electronic daily living aids, or used AT equipment.

## USED EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

13.11  
North Dakota AT4ALL



Connecting people with  
available assistive technology

[ndipat.org/services/equipment-exchange-program](http://ndipat.org/services/equipment-exchange-program)

**(800) 895-4728**



## USED EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

13.12

We know there is a demand for and a supply of used AT equipment around the state, and AT4ALL connects the two. It is a comprehensive online database making the exchange of used equipment simpler and more efficient for everyone.

### Go to AT4ALL to:

- List your used equipment to sell, trade or donate
- Search for available used assistive technology
- Place want ads for items you are looking for

### Listing AT Equipment

Only North Dakota residents may list used equipment on the AT4ALL site.

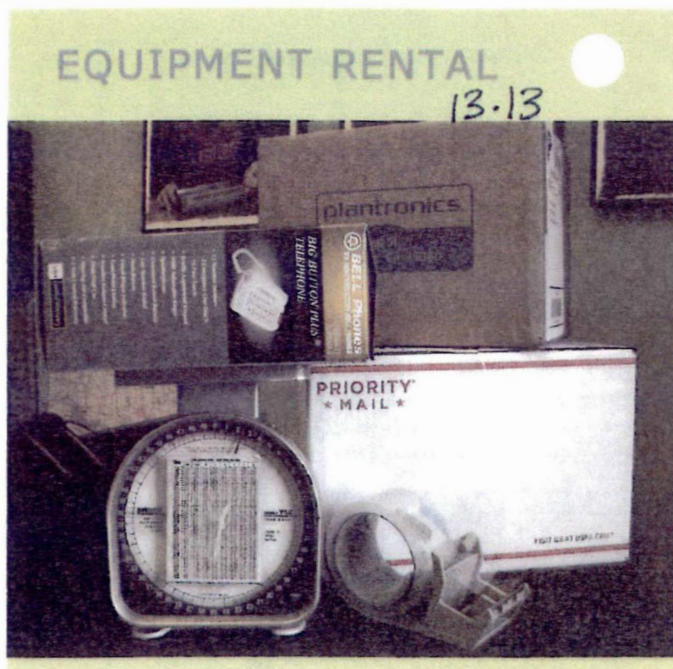
### Locating AT Equipment

Anyone may search the North Dakota AT4ALL site and enter into an agreement with the party listing the equipment. To help you find items readily, the equipment is categorized by type, and may include photos and website links offering additional information.

When equipment of interest is found, the person finding the equipment contacts the lister to organize the sale, exchange or donation of the equipment.

### Requesting AT Equipment

Anyone may use the want ads section of the AT4ALL site to list an AT device they are looking for



All state residents are invited to use IPAT's Equipment Rental Program to engage in short-term use of a broad range of AT devices at a minimal cost. This program is a great option when you need to explore devices before committing resources.

#### How can it help you?

- Lets you try-out AT before you buy
- Replaces an AT device in for repair
- Allows you to explore AT devices in familiar environments
- Meets the need for a temporary device while awaiting funding
- Provides AT devices for demonstration or assessment purposes

**(800) 895-4728**

[ndipat.org/services/equipment-rental-program](http://ndipat.org/services/equipment-rental-program)



## EQUIPMENT RENTAL

13.14



nd.at4all.com

Your go-to site to discover which devices are available through IPAT's Equipment Rental Program.

### Program Specifics:

- Operates on a first-come first-served basis
- Rental fees range from \$15 - \$45, plus shipping
- Equipment is rented for a six-week period

### Examples of AT Equipment Available:

**Health and Safety;** amplified, large button and hands-free phones, medication dispensers, uplift seat assists, talking alarm clocks, no-fee emergency call devices, writing aids

**Electronic Daily Living Aids;** voice-activated remote controls, X-10 modules for household appliances, infrared remote control for phones, TVs and small appliances

**Computer Access;** keyboards – one-handed, mini, ergonomic, contoured and expanded; mouse alternatives – optical, ergonomic, trackball, trackpad, joystick, hands-free; iPads and laptops with specialized apps/software – magnification, voice-recognition, text-to-speech

**Switches;** single, rocker, foot, leaf, sip 'n puff, eye-blink, grasp, treadle

**Communication Devices;** from simple to complex, picture or text based, dedicated and iPads with speech apps; numerous activation options available

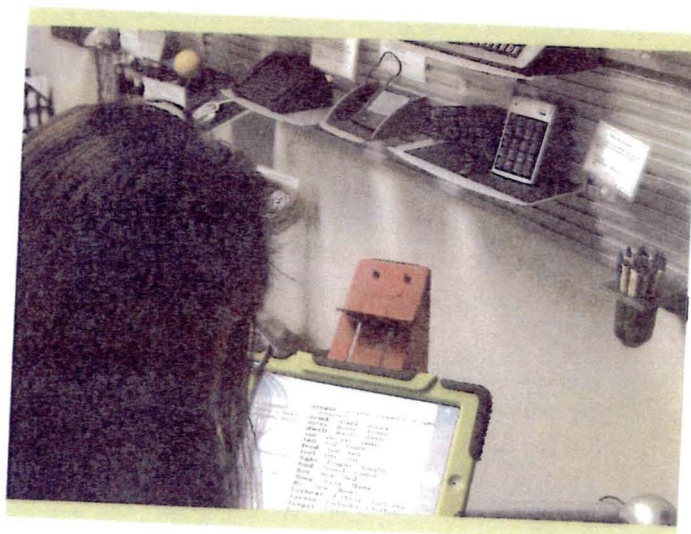
**Vision Aids;** portable and desktop, hand-held or electronic magnifiers, voice dialers, color and money identifiers, talking books



## DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

13.15

Contact the Fargo or Bismarck Technology Access Centers to set-up a time to come in and explore devices on your own, or to request a demonstration of devices by IPAT staff.



Fargo

(701) 365-4728 or (800) 895-4728



## DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

13.16

IPAT welcomes individuals with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging, family members, caregivers, service providers, employers and anyone else interested in assistive technology to visit our demonstration centers.

### The Centers:

- Showcase a broad range of AT for exploration in an interactive setting
- Provide opportunities for individuals or groups living outside the metro-areas of Bismarck and Fargo to see and learn about AT equipment using videoconferencing
- Enable people to explore a variety of AT devices to promote function at home, school, work, and in the community
- Serve as sites to offer trainings and assessments conducted by IPAT staff or other AT specialists
- Are comprehensive and include devices in the areas of:
  - o Communication
  - o Hearing
  - o Vision
  - o Learning, memory and organization
  - o Aids for daily living
  - o Computer access



Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

Judie Lee, CEO • jlee@ndipat.org • 800.895.4728 • ndipat.org  
Interagency Program for Assistive Technology • 3240 15<sup>th</sup> St. S, Suite B • Fargo, ND 58104

**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 2289 – Related to Assistive Technology Services**  
**Senate Appropriations Committee**  
**Senator Holmberg, Chairman**  
**February 2, 2015**

Chairman Holmberg, and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Judie Lee, Chief Executive Officer for the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology, or IPAT, as is commonly known. I am here today to ask you to support IPAT's additional funding request of \$500,000 for the purpose of supporting and maintaining assistive technology services for the elderly and people with disabilities. The additional funding will be used to offset the 12% decrease in IPAT's overall funding level and to expand the state's capacity to deliver AT services, especially to the Western counties.

**Organization**

IPAT was established in 1993 and has been designated by the Governor as the implementing entity to carry out the statewide comprehensive assistive technology (AT) program in North Dakota as outlined in the federal AT Act of 2004, as amended.

IPAT is a nonprofit corporation that transitioned from state government in 2005. Since 2007, IPAT has operated with a combination of federal AT Act funds and state general fund appropriations. The state appropriated funding during the 60<sup>th</sup>

Legislative Session in 2007. IPAT fulfills its mission and leverages additional funding by working with and contracting services on behalf of other agencies and organizations such as: Aging Services; Sprint; and the FCC National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program. IPAT has sustained operations at this funding level since its last appropriation request 8 years ago.

### **Programs and Services**

IPAT is a unique organization that delivers assistive technology (AT) services for individuals who have disabilities of all ages and disability types. People who have been injured, impacted by sudden or chronic disease, who are aging, and people who are born with a disability are realizing the benefits of AT in all aspects of life: living at home, going to school and work, and as community members. If you have an impairment that limits your ability to participate in life activities, IPAT has the knowledge, tools and experience to evaluate how you can benefit from AT. Simply put, IPAT is the one stop resource for AT, not available elsewhere in the state.

More specifically, IPAT provides services both directly to consumers, and to agencies and organizations that serve people who may benefit from assistive technology.

#### *Consumer Services*

- Consumers can go to demonstration centers in both Fargo and Bismarck to consult with IPAT staff and try AT devices.
- People can rent equipment to help them through the decision making process. IPAT has a lending library of over 2000 devices.

- IPAT assists consumers who have equipment they are no longer using find other consumers who have a similar need.
- IPAT helps people locate funding for equipment by providing information and access to funding programs such as Pedaling for Possibilities and the Assistive Technology Financial Loan Program.

#### *Services to Agencies and Organizations*

- IPAT creates awareness of AT through conferences, booths, print materials, website, blogs, newspapers, and public service announcements on TV and radio.
- IPAT provides technical assistance to organizations that are involved in complex projects, such as accessible housing.
- IPAT provides training for groups and individuals regarding specific assistive devices and services.
- IPAT looks for every opportunity to collaborate on and coordinate our efforts with other organizations that share a common mission to assist people to become more independent.

On that note, I would refer the members to the handout in your packet that identifies the many organizations and agencies that IPAT has had the opportunity to serve. These include:

- Agencies and organizations related to government programs that serve children, the aging, and people with disabilities
- Healthcare funding programs
- Healthcare providers



- Rehabilitation providers
- Employers
- Employment agencies
- State agencies
- Schools
- County social service agencies
- Disability service organizations
- Support groups
- Community organizations
- Housing agencies
- Private providers of services for people with developmental disabilities
- Independent living organizations

### **Impact of Services**

I can present many detailed stories and anecdotes that demonstrate the impact of IPAT's services on the lives of people with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging. You will hear some of these stories from consumer testimony shortly. In your packet, is an extensive list of short anecdotes presented by consumers from all fifty- three North Dakota counties.

IPAT's biennial report is also included in your packet and includes important data related to the scope and impact of our state AT services. At this time, however, we would like to highlight the financial impact of IPAT's services.

- Each long term care placement that is delayed or avoided with the use of AT, results in thousands of dollars of personal savings and public

expenditures...per month. At \$7595 per month, the 2-year cost of 1 LTC placement is \$182,280. IPAT has ample consumer testimony that a simple AT device has delayed or avoided a nursing home placement.

- IPAT's demonstration centers ensure that people choose the right AT to meet their needs. Sometimes the determination that a particular device is the wrong one is a success, that is, money not spent.
- IPAT's device reutilization program helps link used AT devices to North Dakotans that need them. This past biennium, 377 pieces of equipment were exchanged, saving consumers a total of \$80,260.
- Agencies (such as education, employment, and aging) can focus on what they do best, rather than spend money on internal programs to meet AT related needs and mandates.
- All of IPAT's direct consumer services are designed to ensure that people have the best opportunity to become aware of, experience, and obtain the right AT, from the right place, at the most reasonable cost.
- The alternative is a fragmented, inefficient, and costly system of services, the outcomes of which are difficult to substantiate and measure, and most certainly a disservice to the people of North Dakota.

## **Trends**

IPAT has identified trends that have increased the demand for AT in recent years:

- Programs that enable seniors to stay at home identify AT as an essential service.

- Programs and initiatives to help people move to the community from institutional settings identify AT as an essential service.
- New state initiatives, such as the Autism Waiver, highlight AT services as an essential component.
- Many younger seniors are now coming from a technology-driven generation and want to know more about AT options to maintain independence as they age.
- IPAT is experiencing increasing demand from programs, such as Older Blind, for high level expertise and technical assistance to evaluate, recommend and deliver increasingly complex AT devices and services.
- And finally, all of IPAT's services to consumers and organizations are in greater demand, especially in Western North Dakota.

These trends align not only with our state's economic expansion, but also with our community's renewed commitment to supporting the needs of all people with disabilities.

### **Funding**

I will refer the Committee to Table 1, showing IPAT's current and proposed federal-state appropriations.

Table 1

2013-2015 Current		2015-2017 DHS Proposed		Increase/Decrease
Federal	\$888,540	Federal	\$724,672	(\$163,868)
State	\$500,000	State	\$500,000	0
Total	\$1,388,540	Total	\$1,224,672	(\$163,868)

This represents a 12 percent decrease in IPAT's overall funding level for the 2015-2017 biennium. A decrease of this significance would necessitate an analysis of priorities in order to bring expenses in line with projected revenue.

The most likely impact would be a reduction in overall operating expenses, such as cost of rent to maintain the Home First Showroom, travel to accomplish public awareness, training, and technical assistance activities and potentially personnel to carry out these activities.

I would ask to present this funding request as a two-part proposal. The first addresses the need for a hold even level of funding to ensure the continuity of current AT services.

The second addresses the needs and trends identified in earlier testimony. To meet these challenges, IPAT needs to expand its infrastructure (space, operating capacity, and trained staff). Currently, IPAT maintains a 2-person presence in Bismarck that serves the larger counties, such as Burleigh and Ward; the growing counties, such as Stark, Williams, and Mckenzie; and the smaller counties with a rapidly aging population. Under this proposal, IPAT would add 2-3 staff, expand space in the Bismarck office, and increase equipment inventory

for demonstration and lending activities. This infrastructure is necessary to expand AT services in the Western counties.

Table 2 shows this 2-part funding proposal:

*Table 2*

Proposed State Appropriation for Hold Even Funding and AT Expansion				
Scenario	Salaries/Benefits (2-3 additional staff)	Expanded Office Rent/Utilities	Additional Operating	Total
Hold Even				\$160,000
AT Infrastructure Expansion	\$274,000	\$46,000	\$20,000	\$340,000
				\$500,000

The total state appropriation under this proposal would increase funding by \$500,000. These enhancements will address the changes we have seen in our state's economy, age demographics, as well as our society's continual integration of technology as a means to achieve goals in community living, employment, and education. Since its previous request for supplemental funding 8 years ago, IPAT has shown that with modest resources, along with strategic partnerships in the public and private sectors, a growing number of North Dakota citizens can benefit from assistive technology services. This funding increase would maintain and expand the state's capacity to deliver a continuum of AT services continuously across all ND counties.



Senator Holmberg and Committee Members, I would like to close by emphasizing that IPAT is *North Dakota's* AT program. IPAT provides comprehensive AT services and assistance to many public and private entities. The service is significant and often critical to solving the issue at hand but not necessarily a weekly or even monthly need. I compare it to having your own doctor, attorney, CPA, or heating and plumbing person. You may not need them real often but when you do, you do not want to place the call and hear the service is no longer available or there is a long waiting list. Therefore, on behalf of our many constituents, we are very appreciative of the legislative process in which we can explain and bring forward for your consideration the collective needs of many.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Judie Lee  
IPAT CEO  
701-365-4728  
[jlee@ndipat.org](mailto:jlee@ndipat.org)  
[www.ndipat.org](http://www.ndipat.org)

# Organizations Served by IPAT

Agency Type/Organization Name	Services Provided
<b>Agencies that serve children, the aging, and people with disabilities</b>	
Adaptive Equipment Services	consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Autism Spectrum Disorder Statewide Taskforce	participated in planning meetings for voucher and waiver programs to identify health registry information, diagnostic criteria and services
Burleigh County Senior Adults Program	presentation
Community Elder Service Network	committee member
Council on Exceptional Children	presentation
Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health	presentation
Early Childhood Intervention Committee	committee member, presentation
Governor's Forum on Aging	presentation
Life Skills & Transition Center	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding; presentation
Money Follows the Person	equipment rental; Served on this task force for 7 years to highlight and inform membership of the importance of considering AT before community placement
North Dakota State Council on Developmental Disabilities	presentations/demonstrations
North Dakota School for the Blind	training/coordination and collaboration
North Dakota School for the Deaf	training/coordination and collaboration
North Dakota Vision Services	technical assistance
North Dakota Voting System Replacement Committee	committee participant
Older Blind Program	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Ombudsman Program	information/resource
Options Counseling	information/resource
Relay North Dakota	contracted to provide outreach services
Regional Aging Service Providers	information/resource
Statewide Aging Collaborative	committee member, information/resource
Statewide Coalition on Aging	participated as a member of this statewide group to move forward in addressing current needs of the elderly and identify future needs; aim is to pool resources and keep services unduplicated and easily accessed
Vocational Rehabilitation	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding

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# Organizations Served by IPAT

Agencies that serve children, the aging, and people with disabilities, continued		
	West Central Vulnerable Adults Coalition	presentation
Healthcare Funding		
	Traditional Medicaid Waiver Workgroup	workgroup member
Healthcare and Rehabilitation Providers		
	Altru Home and Health Services	information/resource
	Altru Rehabilitation Departments	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Audiologists throughout the state	equipment, displays, information/resource
	Beyond Boundaries Therapy	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Edgewood Vista	participate in annual health-fair; provided 4 part training to residents in assisted living on how to use their iPad to increase independent living options
	Elim Nursing Home	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Essentia Health	information/resource
	Essentia Health Rehabilitation Departments	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Essentia Home Health	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Jamestown Regional Medical Center	technical assistance
	Long Term Care Association of North Dakota	consultation regarding the use of AT in long term care settings
	MidDakota Clinic	information/resource
	Napoleon Care Center	equipment rental, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	North Dakota Brain Injury Association	information/resource
	Onward Therapy	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Parish Nurses	provide updates annually on assistive devices that can help the elderly stay at home/ consultation
	Peaceful Pioneer Haven Residential Community	presentation
	Pediatric Therapy Partners	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding

# Organizations Served by IPAT

Healthcare and Rehabilitation Providers, continued		
	Prairie Harvest Mental Health	consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Progressive Therapy Associates	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Prorehab	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Public Health units throughout the state	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Quentin Burdick Health Center	information/resource
	Sanford Health	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Sanford Healthcare Accessories	information/resource
	Sanford Health Rehabilitation Departments	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Sheyenne Crossings	presentation
	St. Alexius Medical Center	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Tribal Cancer Care Forum	presentation
	Valley Memorial Homes	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Veteran's Hospital	information/resource
	Vibra Hospital	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Villa Maria Nursing Home	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Employment Agencies		
	Community Options, Inc.	technical assistance, training
	Experience Works	technical assistance, training
	North Dakota Job Service	technical assistance for purchase, client consultations
	Vocational Training Center	coordination and collaboration/training/demonstrations/assessment
	Veteran's Administration Vocational Rehabilitation	provide consultations

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# Organizations Served by IPAT

State Agencies		
	Aging Services	contractor for telecommunications and senior safety programs
	Attorney General's Office	provide expert testimony in legal cases
	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services	respond to proposed changes to Medicaid amendments specific to AT, resulted in alteration of initial amendment offered
	Department of Health	visit in regard to scope, make-up, and purpose of diagnostic teams for children with autism
	Department of Human Services	member II/DD Medicaid HCBS waiver amendments workgroup
	Department of Information Technology	provided technical assistance with web accessibility, telecommunications
	Department of Public Education	assisted with the drafting of guidelines to AT in education, responded to requests to provide training to educators and staff on AT for various populations (children with autism, communication disorders, learning disabilities)
	Department of Public Instruction	Consumer Advisory Council member, technical assistance
	Department of Transportation	technical assistance
	Division of Developmental Disabilities	participate in meetings regarding ID/DD HSBS waiver
	Dual Sensory Project	partner in NDBEDP (deaf-blind telecommunication)
	Home and Community-Based Services	responded to waivers & AT program contributions, service, involvement, and coverage of service
	Emergency Management	5 years on the Special Needs Registry task force to develop the volunteer registry of those at risk during an emergency; collaborated to identify IPAT as an AT resource for temporary shelters
	Secretary of State	technical assistance with accessible voting
	Protection and Advocacy	consultation on assistive technology possibilities when they are working with due process for education and vocational rehabilitation/collaborate on issues relating to people accessing AT
	Vocational Rehabilitation	lead agency resource for federal funding; provide assessments/demonstrations to VR clients/ training
	Workforce Safety and Insurance	assessments/demonstrations
Schools and Universities		
	Bismarck Early Childhood Education Program	presentation
	Fort Berthold Community College	presentation/training
	Mayville State University	presentation/training
	North Dakota State College of Science	pre-service training for Occupational Therapy Assistant students



# Organizations Served by IPAT

## Schools and Universities, continued

North Dakota State University	collaborated with electrical engineering department to create Home First Showroom App; technical assistance to student projects; equipment rentals and demonstrations
North Dakota Transition Community of Practice	committee member
Northwest Technical College	presentation
Public schools throughout the state	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Sitting Bull College	technical assistance to counselor
Standing Rock Community School	presentation
University of Mary	pre-service training for Physical and Occupational Therapy students
University of North Dakota	pre-service training for Physical and Occupational Therapy students
United Tribes Technical College	twice yearly present to staff and students on IPAT and assistive technology

## County Social Services

Statewide	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
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## Disability Service Organizations

Alzheimer's Association of Minnesota-North Dakota	presentations/demonstrations/ consultations
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired	presentation
Autism Society of North Dakota	demonstration
Cystic Fibrosis Association of North Dakota	presentations/demonstrations
Muscular Dystrophy Association	information/resource
North Dakota Association for the Blind	presentations/coordination and collaboration
North Dakota Multiple Sclerosis Society	presentations/demonstrations
North Dakota National Federation of the Blind Annual Conference	presentation
Northern Plains Conference on Aging and Disability	presentation
Pathfinders	exhibit and present on AT at their annual conference for parents; training
Turtle Mountain Disabilities Conference	presentation

## Support groups

ALS Support Group	training on AT solutions for ALS
Hearing Support Group	presentation; information/ resource
Parkinson's Support Group	training on AT resources for those who have Parkinson's Disease

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# Organizations served by IPAT

Support groups, continued		
	Vision Support Group	information/ resource
Community organizations		
	Community of Care	Home First tour/ demonstrations
	Elder Care Services	set-up a long-term display of AT for the elderly in the community center; work closely with the elder care providers
	Faith Lutheran Church, Fargo	presentation
	Family Voices	provide topical call training per request on assistive technology
	First Link	board member
	Kiwanis	presentation
	Metro Area Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities	information/resource
	Pediatric Quorum - Sanford Health Services	8 years of service to advocate for AT inclusion in health services for children
	Project HERO	collaborate on information and resources
	Rebuilding Together of Greater Bismarck/ Mandan	10 years on board, actively involved in rehabilitating over 60 homes for low income, elderly in need of AT to stay home safely
	Senior Centers throughout the state	information/ resource/ demonstrations
	Senior Connections	presentation
	United Way	4 years of monthly meetings to share community resources for those that are elderly, of low income or have disabilities - pool resources and collaborate
Housing agencies		
	Fargo Housing Authority	information/resource
	Housing Alliance of North Dakota	served on this alliance for 7 years, helped move the legislative action forward to create the Housing Initiative Fund
	NDHFA Housing Incentive Fund	field calls from HIF seekers specific to how to go about building for accessibility
	North Dakota Housing Finance Agency	presentation/ information/ resource
Private providers of services for people with developmental disabilities		
	Able, Inc.-Dickinson	information/resource
	Anne Carlsen Center for Children-Jamestown	information/resource
	The Arc	information/resource
	Community Living Services	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Easter Seals-Mandan	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase

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# Organizations Served by IPAT

Private providers of services for people with developmental disabilities, continued		
	Friendship, Inc.-Fargo/Grafton	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	HAV-IT Services-Harvey	equipment rental, training, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Open Door Center-Valley City	information/ resource
	HIT, Inc.-Mandan	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Independent Living		
	Dakota Center for Independent Living	training, technical assistance, collaboration
	Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living	training, technical assistance, collaboration
	Independence Independent Living Center	training, technical assistance, collaboration
	Options Independent Living Center	training, technical assistance, collaboration
Other Organizations and Projects		
	Alliance Realty	information/resource on accessible housing
	ATAP (Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs)	member/ training / presentation
	DakotaLink (South Dakota AT program)	information/resource
	Fort Berthold Reservation	information/resource
	HAVA (Help America Vote Act) Project	technical assistance to county auditors
	KXMB Noon Show, Bismarck	noon spots to highlight and market various aspects/equipment of IPAT
	Pediatric Acquired Brain Injury Committee	committee member
	Sons of Norway	presentation
	Spirit Lake Tribe	information/resource
	Standing Rock Reservation	information/resource
	Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians	presentations
	WDAY media	Home First Showroom promotion

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Making anything possible with Assistive Technology



**Helping North Dakotans of All  
Ages and Abilities Engage in Life**

Biennium Report October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2014



More than ever, assistive technology is helping people with disabilities by increasing their involvement in all areas of daily life, whether that be in the community, in the classroom, at work, or while remaining at home. IPAT delivers services so people with disabilities or those experiencing the effects of aging can get the assistive technology they need.

## Who are we?

The Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) is a non-profit organization that brings assistive technology (AT) into the lives of all North Dakotans that need it.

We were designated by the Governor as the implementing entity for the Statewide Assistive Technology Program in 1993. IPAT is governed by a Board of Directors, and receives program guidance through our Consumer Advisory Council, which is made up of individuals and agency staff representing a range of ages, abilities, and geographic regions of the state.

## What do we do?

We deliver services so all state residents can learn about, try and obtain the AT they need to close the gap between ability and disability. The field of assistive technology is our area of expertise, and we keep up with its advances so we can connect North Dakotans to the AT they need to stay involved in the activities of life. IPAT receives federal dollars through the Assistive Technology Act, state funding as appropriated by the State Legislature, and actively seeks other funding sources that fit our mission in delivering AT.

## EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

North Dakotans with disabilities, spouses, parents, and service providers all have options available to explore assistive technology using IPAT's AT device demonstration centers. Our centers in Fargo and Bismarck are vital in introducing the possibility AT holds for increasing involvement, helping individuals make decisions about which AT will meet their needs, and avoiding wasted expenditures on the purchase of the wrong AT.

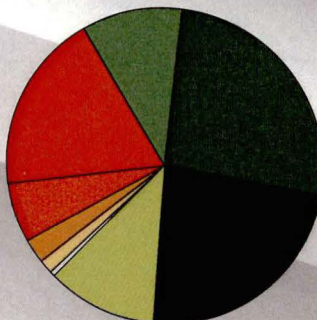
We offer a comprehensive selection of devices in 10 different categories for demonstration, and in this reporting period, 522 device demonstrations were provided to 677 people with 100% of the demonstrations resulting in a decision as to whether or not the AT device would meet the individual with disabilities needs.



## What were people interested in trying?

### Demonstration Participants

Education	62	9%
Employment	69	10%
Health	31	5%
Community Living	515	76%



### Demos by Device Type

137	Hearing
121	Vision
96	Daily Living
59	Speech Communications
54	Computer Related
32	Learning
13	Environmental Adaptations
8	Mobility
2	Recreation
0	Vehicle Modifications

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## New Section Added to Fargo Demonstration Center



We added a new component to our centers in 2013, the *Home First Showroom*. It is located in Fargo, and features AT devices to do every-day tasks in a simulated home environment to include a kitchen, living room, bathroom, study, dining room and bedroom. You can take a virtual tour by downloading IPAT's Home First Showroom App for the iPad. It can be found at the Apple App Store under "ndipat". Our goal in this newly developed *Showroom* is to help people see the potential AT devices have to ease or erase the difficulties of remaining home by showing them a different way to do things – the use of AT.

Welcome  
Home First Showroom



### AT Demonstration Impacts Woman with Hearing Loss

A woman arrived at IPAT's demonstration center following a recommendation from her audiologist. As an individual born with a significant hearing loss, and aging into an even more significant loss, she was having trouble hearing even the loudest alarm clock, her doorbell and her phone ringing. She explored various options and opted to try an all-in-one signaling system.

She called after a month to say, "I don't know what I would do without this! I sleep so much better because I know the bed-shaker will wake me, and I won't be late for work. This is going to help me stay in my apartment and keep my job, it is a godsend."

## EQUIPMENT RENTAL PROGRAM

We have over 2,000 pieces of AT equipment to loan out to North Dakotans. They are housed in our Fargo office and available to all state residents. Our main goal in offering this service is to provide an opportunity for people to 'try before they buy'. Equipment loans are for up to six weeks, and include a small rental fee, plus shipping and handling charges.

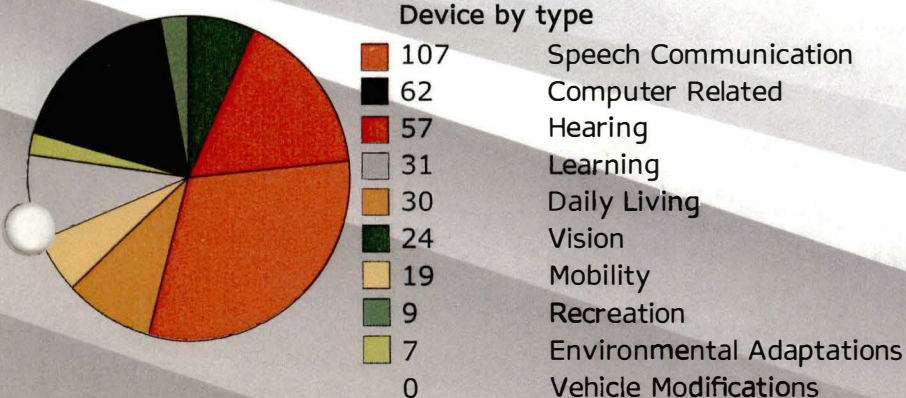
People with disabilities borrow IPAT's devices to help them decide if they will work for them in the environments they are needed, to replace a device that is in for repair, or to justify a funding request. Professionals borrow our devices for

presentations, trainings, or client assessment purposes. IPAT's equipment device loan program helps people make good purchasing decisions, which helps ensure that public and private resources are used wisely.

We are pleased to be able to meet the borrowing needs of state residents through our equipment rental program, and offer a wide range of equipment to help them communicate, see, hear, remember, organize or use a computer. Requested items are delivered directly to the end-user, or may be picked up in our Fargo office.

From 2012-2014, IPAT helped individuals and organizations make correct purchasing decisions or provide funding justification by engaging in a total of 347 equipment rental and renewals statewide. The majority of the borrowers were individuals with disabilities, representatives from education, and representatives from health.

### What was borrowed?



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## AT Device Loan Impacts Man's Employment Options

A working age man with low vision was in need of a way to read documents. He rented a portable digital magnifier from the IPAT Equipment Loan program to use at work for six weeks. The ability to borrow this device, otherwise not available to him without purchase, allowed him to see the documents and text needed on the job. This loan provided a way for him to demonstrate to his employer that he could continue being productive at his present part-time job. This individual later stated that the magnifier could expand his future employment opportunities because of the tasks he was now able to perform.

## AT FUNDING PROGRAMS

IPAT administers 2 different types of AT funding programs. One provides grants to individuals and the other is a financial loan program.



IPAT partners with Alerus Financial to administer the Assistive Technology Financial Loan (ATFL) program. It offers the people of North Dakota a financing option to help bridge the gap between resources and the funds needed to purchase assistive technology devices and services. Participants can borrow between \$500 and \$50,000 with flexible terms, and low-interest rates. When needed, help is offered in device selection, and we will work with parties for whom payment is problematic.

During this reporting period, the ATFL program has \$14,727.8 on loan to individuals in North Dakota to purchase AT.

### AT Funding Grant Impacts Individual with MS

A woman with advanced Multiple Sclerosis, who suddenly lost the use of her hands, contacted IPAT for help in determining a way to continue to control a computer and obtain a funding source to pay for it. A computer was one of the only ways she had left to connect with the world around her, and one of the few ways she could still be independent.



IPAT assessed her needs, and loaned AT equipment to help her determine the appropriate computer access technology. After decisions were made on the best assistive technology solution for her needs, the woman worked with IPAT's Pedaling for Possibilities program and the Multiple Sclerosis Society to fund the needed equipment. With the help of both entities, the following was purchased; a computer, large monitor, voice recognition software, a high quality headset, and training.

She later wrote an article using the equipment she received. In it she stated, "This equipment makes me feel like I've regained some of my life again, and it is quite an amazing feeling. This gift allows me to communicate in many ways, gain new knowledge through libraries and books, stimulate my mind through brain teasers, travel all over the world via Google, pay bills, and lets me listen to music from Gangnam Style to Sinatra. P4P - this is humanity at its finest!"

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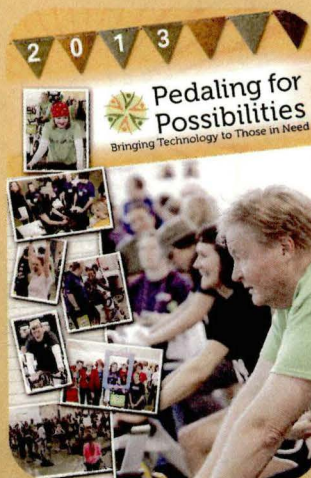
### GRANT PROGRAM:

#### PEDALING FOR POSSIBILITIES

IPAT hosts an annual stationary bike team event in Fargo, called *Pedaling for Possibilities (P4P)*. This event is for the exclusive purpose of raising money to purchase AT devices and services for people unable to obtain them through other avenues.

To make this happen, IPAT works with community businesses to donate funds or in-kind services, and helps interested parties form bike teams to raise money and ride on event day. The funds generated are made available to purchase AT for individuals through an application and panel review process 3 times per year. Funds from other organizations can also be leveraged to combine with the P4P awards when appropriate. The P4P funding awards are treated as grants with no expectation of repayment. Through this annual event, we make AT possibilities for eligible applicants a reality.

To date this event has raised \$93,000 which has been used to purchase AT devices for 86 North Dakotans living in 31 counties. During this reporting period, 46 people with disabilities were helped with funds totaling \$47,732 to purchase AT specific to their individual needs.







## DEVICE REUTILIZATION PROGRAM North Dakota AT4ALL

IPAT has a program that helps to link used assistive technology devices to North Dakotans with disabilities that need them. It is a web-based equipment reutilization service called AT4ALL. It consists of a comprehensive online database that makes the reutilization of used equipment simpler and more efficient for everyone.

AT4ALL offers three distinct services; it lets any state resident list their used AT equipment for sale, trade or donation, it provides a venue for those looking for used AT to search for what is available, and it lets AT users place ads for items they are looking for. IPAT administers the site, which also incorporates the listings of other state re-use program partners. This combined effort has made device reutilization a well-organized, one-stop site for everyone to easily participate in AT re-use.

During this reporting period, 377 pieces of equipment were exchanged, saving consumers a total of \$80,260 when compared to buying the equipment new.

### AT Reutilization Impacts a ND Veteran

A North Dakota veteran's residential health care representative (RHCR) contacted IPAT to help her with an elderly client with low vision and tremors who wanted to use a computer to send emails and access the internet. These age related impairments were making it difficult for him to successfully use a standard keyboard and monitor. Through IPAT, the RHCR learned about different AT options, and chose to try an alternative keyboard with 1-inch keys and reduced keyset, paired with the computer's built-in accessibility features of sticky-keys, filter keys, and on-screen magnification for her client.

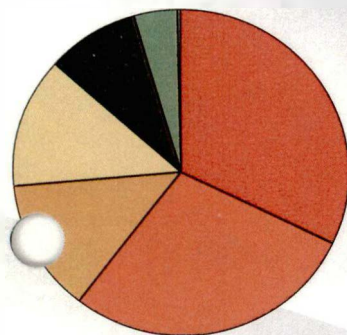
The solution was a good fit, but with a limited fixed income and no funding source available to purchase the AT, the veteran still could not make using the keyboard a reality. Fortunately, IPAT's re-use program, AT4ALL had several keyboards available that had the potential to meet the veteran's needs. This was brought to the attention of the RHCR who then searched AT4ALL's online listings. She located a keyboard with the features needed; larger keys, simplified alphabetic keyboard, and built-in mouse. The used alternative keyboard listed on AT4ALL was affordable, and the other needed accommodations were enabled via the built-in computer accessibility options at no cost. Due to IPAT's reutilization program and staff expertise, this veteran is now spending his time emailing and surfing the internet because he was able to get the AT he needed.

### ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

IPAT provides direct services to help individuals, family members and agency staff improve AT outcomes, services, management and/or policies. We helped 2,372 people address their AT concerns through the use of our toll-free lines, email, website, blog and videoconferencing services. Our most frequent seeker of IPAT expertise is an individual with disabilities looking for a solution to a specific problem followed by their family members or representatives.



### Who called?



764	Individuals
672	Family/Reps
307	Health
307	Community
210	Education
100	Employment
2	Technology

### PUBLIC AWARENESS and INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Newsletter Recipients	19,460
Blog Subscribers	161
Blog Visitors	65,912
Website Visitors	65,934

We also present and exhibit at conferences and workshops statewide to help get the word out about the power of AT and the services of IPAT. We participated in 228 events attended by 11,432 people during this reporting period.

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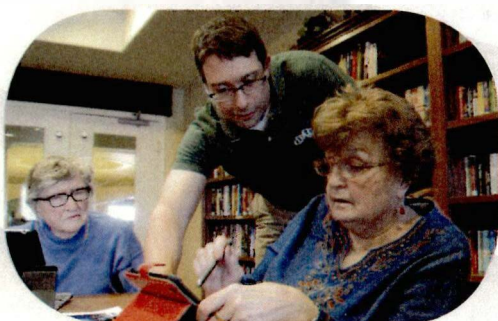


## AT Awareness Impacts Large Viewing Audience

During this reporting period, IPAT was fortunate to forge a relationship with Marci Narum, the host of KXMB's televised *Noon Show*, which airs throughout southwestern North Dakota. We completed a series of seven interviews highlighting assistive technology for vision loss, traumatic brain injury, speech, emergency preparedness, daily living, computers, and aging at home. The show reaches an audience of 7,000 and if not caught live, episodes archived on the KX website for over a year.

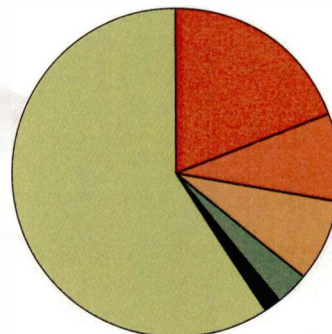
## AT TRAINING

We provide training for individuals as well as large and small groups. Typically, individual training is centered on how to use a specific assistive technology device or software program, whereas group training tends to be customized to the end-user. Our staff provides training in the environment that best suits the training needs and audience, whether that is onsite, or offsite through videoconferencing or webinar delivery. We delivered 45 trainings to 371 participants that included individuals with disabilities, parent groups, service providers and other interested community members.



### Training Participants

74	Education
33	Individuals
31	Community
13	Family/Reps
6	Technology
0	Employment
0	Health
227	Unable to Categorize



## AT Training Helps Elderly with Mobile Tablet Use

Over the last year, an IPAT staff member worked with a local apartment complex for seniors, to provide 6 training sessions to 35 residents. Each participant owned their own tablet, and with the guidance of IPAT, learned to operate and use it with less trepidation. The training provided an introduction to the pre-loaded apps; practice changing the settings to increase font size, change background color, zoom, and use text-to-speech; opportunities to use the tablet to communicate via email, instant messaging and Skype; a chance to set it up as an organizational tool to track appointments, take medications, and create daily schedules; and specific training on how to access the internet for general information, to locate new apps, and how to download them.

By reaching out to those experiencing the effects of aging, IPAT has helped this group become more comfortable using technology. This familiarity will be of benefit when their abilities change. By learning the technology now, they will be ready to use specialized AT apps for memory, vision, hearing or communication losses. They will stay engaged and independent longer, which is of benefit to all.

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY STATEWIDE RESOURCE

North Dakota's investment in IPAT's infrastructure makes it possible for us to deliver quality AT related services to state and private entities in a cost effective manner. Our infrastructure can be used by all people in ND which reduces the duplication of services and increases collaboration. We support entities such as human service providers, education, employers, and healthcare providers in their decision making process through their use of our equipment loan library, demonstration centers, and by accessing our AT expertise. The results are more appropriate and cost effective AT purchases.

During this reporting period we have delivered the following services for Federal, State, & Private Entities:

- Assistive Safety Device Distribution Service
- Research Alliance for Accessible Voting
- Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Service
- Fee for Service Provision
- National Deaf Blind Equipment Distribution Service
- Sprint

IPAT's dedicated focus on assistive technology, our continuum of AT services, coupled with knowledgeable and experienced staff, make us the go-to resource to carry out AT related activities.





Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

*attachment C #1*

## HELPING NORTH DAKOTANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN ENGAGE IN LIFE

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**County With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

- Adams an 86 year old woman with congestive heart failure and macular degeneration can now safely go down her basement to do her laundry using a stair lift.
- Barnes a senior with severe vision loss was able to determine if an iPad with magnification apps worked for her before she spent the dollars by renting this equipment from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library. She discovered that she was able to read and see objects in her environment with this more cost effective equipment versus spending thousands on a traditional video magnifier.
- Benson a student with a Traumatic Brain Injury, who was referred by her vocational rehabilitation counselor, found solutions to help her succeed in college and life. She discovered apps to help her with memory loss, reading, writing, and taking notes for the smartphone she already owned, as well as, other solutions.
- Billings a senior with physical disabilities is now able to safely transport items around his home on a walker tray, enabling him to be more independent.
- Bottineau a 63 year old woman with MS can now operate her computer independently with training she received on Dragon Naturally Speaking, speech recognition software.
- Bowman a 92 year old POW is now able to live independently again with devices that help him to dress himself, get up from chairs, and alert others when there is an emergency.
- Burke a 71 year old woman with right side paralysis is now able to continue living independently at home using a manual wheelchair.
- Burleigh a preschooler with Autism is now communicating with family and peers and developing his language skills after using the IPAT Equipment Rental Program to try various communication devices to help determine purchase.
- Cass a 60 year old man with workplace injuries discovered solutions for reading and writing at the Fargo IPAT Center. After an equipment trial through IPAT's Rental program and purchase by ND Workforce Safety and Insurance, the man was able to obtain his GED and pursue new employment.
- Cavalier a new high school graduate with a learning disability was referred by vocational rehabilitation for a consultation to help her find solutions to help her succeed in college and her chosen career. She left the consultation with solutions for reading, writing, spelling, and note taking.

**County      With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

Dickey	a 23 year old woman with Down Syndrome and a speech impairment is now able to communicate with others, help cook meals, take her medications, and remember daily chores and events with an iPad and various apps.
Divide	a senior with a physical disability is now able to ambulate in her own home and remain there safely using a walker she obtained through IPAT's senior safety program. Without this device, she would not have the means to remain in her own home and would be at a high risk for falls and institutionalization.
Dunn	an individual who is deaf is now alerted when his smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector alarm goes off with the use of an adapted flashing alarm system.
Eddy	a college student with a learning disability learned about solutions for reading, writing, spelling, note taking, math, and memory loss at the IPAT Center. After recommendations from IPAT and equipment purchase by ND Vocational Rehabilitation, she is now succeeding in school and pursuing her chosen career.
Emmons	a 46 year old woman with MS and unable to move below the neck is now able to independently control her TV, fan, DVD, and lights with a speech activated remote control, thereby removing the need to call on staff to help her.
Foster	a senior is now able to take her medication regularly through the use of a medication dispenser specific to her needs, allowing her to stay living at home.
Golden Valley	a woman with severe physical disabilities is now able to feed herself with the use of adapted dinnerware and a specialized cuff to help her hold the utensils in her hand, reducing the need for paid staff to help her.
Grand Forks	a 60 year old architect with a sudden severe hearing loss discovered an iPad app that allows him to understand a person's speech almost instantaneously due to speech recognition. With recommendations from IPAT, he purchased the equipment and is now communicating with his coworkers and colleagues again.
Grant	a 76 year old man with memory loss is now able live at home independently using solutions to help with medication to ensure he is taking his medications as ordered by his doctor.
Griggs	a child with a developmental disability rented several communication devices from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library which helped his parents, speech pathologist, and the school, determine which device would be appropriate for his communication needs.
Hettinger	a senior is now able to read independently with the use of a tray table for her wheelchair.
Kidder	a senior is now able to call 911 for help with the push of a button on a portable alerting device with no added monthly fee, allowing her to live safely at home even if the phone is not nearby.

**County With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

- LaMoure** an 84 year old woman with physical disabilities discovered solutions to help her get in and out of the bathtub safely. After the equipment purchase, she can now bathe independently, which allows her to stay in her own home.
- Logan** a 57 year old woman with severe physical disabilities is now able to get up on her own with the aid of a lift chair.
- McHenry** a 3 year old boy with a speech disorder is now able to communicate his wants and needs with his family, teachers and peers in all environments with an iPad and a communication app.
- McIntosh** a man with a severe hearing impairment and dementia is now able to get in/out of his bed by himself and safely bathe, allowing him to stay in his home with his wife.
- McKenzie** a young student with multiple disabilities was able to stay at home with her parents after an IPAT consultation that led to recommendations for home modifications in the bathroom and bedroom.
- McLean** a senior with vision loss was able to try cheaper alternatives to expensive video magnifiers through the IPAT Equipment Rental program. This provided valuable information and cost savings when it came time for purchase.
- Mercer** a senior who lost the ability to use one of his arms due to a stroke is now able to open cans and prepare his own meals without assistance. He is very proud to be able to live independently again!
- Morton** a 61 year old man who is legally blind is now able to read his medication bottles, mail, newspapers, and food labels with a portable reader and magnifier.
- Mountrail** a 48 year old woman with a severe speech and physical disability can now communicate effectively using an iPad communication app.
- Nelson** a 95 year old woman with a hearing loss is now able to hear her family and friends with a new hearing device.
- Oliver** a 70 year old man is now able to access his own home and bathe independently using a cane and bath chair.
- Pembina** a 58 year old woman who is legally blind is now able to read any text with a specialized device that speaks the printed word aloud. This enables her to read most anything in her environment independently such as her medication bottles, bills, and mail.
- Pierce** a young man with a traumatic brain injury is now able to compensate for his severe memory loss with the aid of a smartphone and memory apps, which allows him to be safer and more independent, giving his family members piece of mind.

**County      With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

Ramsey	an older than average college student with Rheumatoid Arthritis, vision and hearing loss, was able to be successful in college with solutions for computer access and reading/writing she received during an IPAT consultation.
Ransom	a young woman with progressive speech and physical disabilities due to ALS received consultation, equipment trials, and recommendations for devices to help her access the computer and communication with family and friends.
Renville	a 71 year old woman with a traumatic brain injury can now bathe herself independently with equipment that allows her to safely enter and exit her bath tub.
Richland	a 53 year old woman is now traveling independently to new places without fear due to a handheld talking GPS device.
Rolette	a 63 year old woman with a visual impairment is now able to conduct her own business through a used computer she obtained through IPAT's used equipment online resource, AT4All, which allows anyone from North Dakota to list their used equipment.
Sargent	a man with ALS was able to rent a voice amplifier from the IPAT equipment rental program to aid him in communicating with family, friends and doctors the last months of his life.
Sheridan	a 48 year old woman with expressive language disabilities and minimal speech, is now able to type, write, or draw her ideas using an iPad with various communication apps.
Sioux	a young man with a reading disability was able to try equipment from the IPAT Equipment Rental Program such as a Reading Pen that allows him to scan a word and have it read aloud. These rentals helped determine a more successful purchase.
Slope	a young student with a vision loss was able to have access to his school curriculum with devices such as scan-and-read software to read his worksheets aloud.
Stark	a 50 year old woman with MS is now able to remain driving and keep her independence with hand controls for her vehicle.
Steele	a senior who was unable to climb stairs due to a temporary injury rented the EZ-step cane from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library, which enabled him to climb stairs throughout his recovery time without pain.
Stutsman	a 46 year old woman with children at home who is deaf is now notified with a specialized device that flashes lights and provides vibration when doorbells sound, phones ring, or smoke alarms blast.



**County With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

owner	a woman who has deafness and blindness is now able to communicate by connecting long distance with family and friends through use of a computer, big screen monitor, large keyboard, and Skype, which allows her to lip read from far away.
Trall	a middle school student with Autism can now take notes in class independently with solutions he and his parents learned about after a visit to the IPAT Demonstration Center.
Walsh	a man with MS is now able to continue his love of teaching with solutions such as speech recognition software and specialized keyboards that he learned about during an IPAT consultation.
Ward	siblings ages 1, 3, and 5 with hearing impairments are now able to communicate and access information with a family FM system.
Wells	a 24 year old man with COPD is now able to mobilize independently in his home with the aid of a stair lift. This allows him to access the bus without help and lessens the safety risks for himself and his caregivers.
Williams	a 56 year old woman who is legally blind is now much more independent with a portable barcode reader that allows her to scan and have spoken aloud the name of groceries, medicines or other household products with UPC codes. This device has eliminated product confusion and increased safety.

## USED EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

North Dakota AT4ALL



Connecting people with  
available assistive technology

[ndipat.org/services/equipment-exchange-program](http://ndipat.org/services/equipment-exchange-program)

**(800) 895-4728**



## EQUIPMENT RENTAL



All state residents are invited to use IPAT's Equipment Rental Program to engage in short-term use of a broad range of AT devices at a minimal cost. This program is a great option when you need to explore devices before committing resources.

### How can it help you?

- Lets you try-out AT before you buy
- Replaces an AT device in for repair
- Allows you to explore AT devices in familiar environments
- Meets the need for a temporary device while awaiting funding
- Provides AT devices for demonstration or assessment purposes

**(800) 895-4728**

[ndipat.org/services/equipment-rental-program](http://ndipat.org/services/equipment-rental-program)  
[ipatloan@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatloan@ndipat.org)

## DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

Contact the Fargo or Bismarck Technology Access Centers to set-up a time to come in and explore devices on your own, or to request a demonstration of devices by IPAT staff.



### Fargo

**(701) 365-4728 or (800) 895-4728**



### Bismarck

**(701) 258-4728 or (888) 540-4728**



## USED EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

We know there is a demand for and a supply of used AT equipment around the state, and AT4ALL connects the two. It is a comprehensive online database making the exchange of used equipment simpler and more efficient for everyone.

### Go to AT4ALL to:

- List your used equipment to sell, trade or donate
- Search for available used assistive technology
- Place want ads for items you are looking for

### Listing AT Equipment

Only North Dakota residents may list used equipment on the AT4ALL site.

### Locating AT Equipment

Anyone may search the North Dakota AT4ALL site and enter into an agreement with the party listing the equipment. To help you find items readily, the equipment is categorized by type, and may include photos and website links offering additional information.

When equipment of interest is found, the person finding the equipment contacts the lister to organize the sale, exchange or donation of the equipment.

### Requesting AT Equipment

Anyone may use the want ads section of the AT4ALL site to list an AT device they are looking for.

## EQUIPMENT RENTAL



nd.at4all.com

Your go-to site to discover which devices are available through IPAT's Equipment Rental Program.

### Program Specifics:

- Operates on a first-come first-served basis.
- Rental fees range from \$15 - \$45, plus shipping
- Equipment is rented for a six-week period

### Examples of AT Equipment Available:

**Health and Safety;** amplified, large button and hands-free phones, medication dispensers, uplift seat assists, talking alarm clocks, no-fee emergency call devices, writing aids

**Electronic Daily Living Aids;** voice-activated remote controls, X-10 modules for household appliances, infrared remote control for phones, TVs and small appliances

**Computer Access;** keyboards – one-handed, mini, ergonomic, contoured and expanded; mouse alternatives – optical, ergonomic, trackball, trackpad, joystick, hands-free; iPads and laptops with specialized apps/software – magnification, voice-recognition, text-to-speech

**Switches;** single, rocker, foot, leaf, sip 'n puff, eye-blink, grasp, treadle

**Communication Devices;** from simple to complex, picture or text based, dedicated and iPads with speech apps; numerous activation options available

**Vision Aids;** portable and desktop, hand-held or electronic magnifiers, voice dialers, color and money identifiers, talking books

**Hearing Devices;** visual signalers for phone, doorbell, and fire, alarm with bed-shaker, assisted listening devices, amplified phones

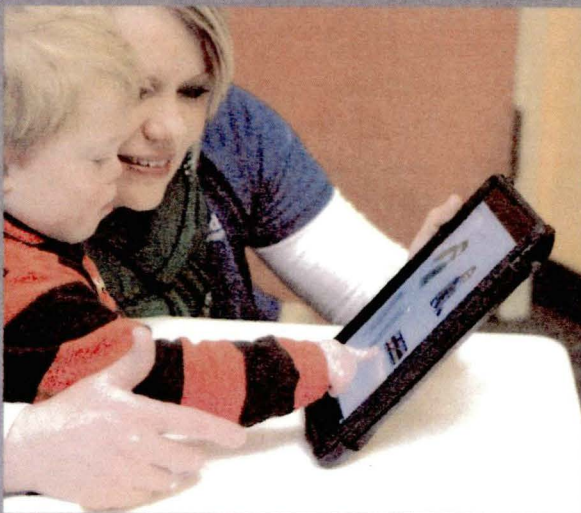
## DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

IPAT welcomes individuals with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging, family members, caregivers, service providers, employers and anyone else interested in assistive technology to visit our demonstration centers.

## The Centers:

- Showcase a broad range of AT for exploration in an interactive setting
- Provide opportunities for individuals or groups living outside the metro-areas of Bismarck and Fargo to see and learn about AT equipment using videoconferencing
- Enable people to explore a variety of AT devices to promote function at home, school, work, and in the community
- Serve as sites to offer trainings and assessments conducted by IPAT staff or other AT specialists
- Are comprehensive and include devices in the areas of:
  - o Communication
  - o Hearing
  - o Vision
  - o Learning, memory and organization
  - o Aids for daily living
  - o Computer access

## FUNDING PROGRAM



## Pedaling for Possibilities

Pedaling for Possibilities is IPAT's annual stationary bike team event. Its sole purpose is to raise money to purchase assistive technology for people with disabilities who are not able to obtain it through other funding avenues.

### Who is eligible for funds?

Residents of North Dakota and Moorhead, MN who:

- Have a clearly established need for AT,
- Have needs not met by other funding programs, and
- Meet the financial eligibility criteria set forth on the application.

## FINANCIAL LOAN PROGRAM



**Assistive Technology  
Financial Loan**  
*Bridging Your Financial Gap*

Providing a financing option for the purchase of assistive technology  
(800) 895-4728 • [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org)

Download IPAT's  
Home First Showroom  
App for iPad free!



Search for "NDipat" on  
the Apple App Store.



0.3

## CONTACT IPAT

### Fargo Office

3240 15th Street South, Suite B  
Fargo, ND 58104

**Local:** (701) 365-4728

**Toll Free:** (800) 895-4728

**Fax:** (701) 365-6242

### Bismarck Office

400 East Broadway Ave, Suite 501  
Bismarck, ND 58501

**Local:** (701) 258-4728

**Toll Free:** (888) 540-4728

**Fax:** (701) 258-7474

[ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org) • [ipatinfo@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatinfo@ndipat.org)



## FUNDING PROGRAM

### Requesting Funds

Download and complete the Pedaling for Possibilities Application found at [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org) or request an application by calling (800) 895-4728.

### Disbursing Funds

- There is no cap set on individual awards, but it is expected that award requests will not exceed \$2,000
- AT funds awarded will be made directly to the device or service vendor
- Awarded funds are considered grants and are not expected to be paid back
- Individuals are eligible for only one award during a twelve-month period
- Funds can be used in partnership with private or public funds to close the gap in AT device/service costs

### What can be purchased?

A wide range of AT devices and services to include but not be limited to:

Communication devices, home modifications, vision equipment, vehicle modifications, computer access hardware/software, scooters, hearing aids, electronic daily living aids, or used AT equipment.

## FINANCIAL LOAN PROGRAM

The Assistive Technology Financial Loan (ATFL) program offers the people of North Dakota a financing option to help bridge the gap between resources and the funds needed to purchase assistive technology devices and services.

### Who can apply?

- You must be a person with a disability, a family member, or approved representative of a person with a disability,
- You need to demonstrate the ability to repay a loan, and
- The end-user of the AT loan applied for must be a North Dakota resident.

### What does it offer?

- IPAT consultant expertise in device selection
- Low-interest loans to make getting AT easier for people with disabilities
- Loans typically at 2% above money market savings
- Help in working with you if payments are problematic

### Loan Information:

- Minimum \$500 – Maximum \$50,000
- Terms can be flexible
- Loans held by Alerus Financial

### Examples of what can be purchased:

- Communication systems
- Hearing aids and assistive listening devices
- Assessments
- Home modifications
- Computers and disability related software
- Equipment repair and warranties
- Manual or motorized wheelchairs and scooters
- Training to use the AT purchased
- Adapted Vehicles
- Low vision devices

## CONTACT IPAT

### Call - (800) 895-4728

. . . . . to begin closing the gap between ability and disability for yourself or someone you care about by discussing potential assistive technology solutions with IPAT staff.

### Visit our website - [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org)

. . . . . to learn about our services, list or locate a piece of used AT equipment, read our blog posts, or donate to Pedaling for Possibilities.

### Email - [ipatinfo@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatinfo@ndipat.org)

. . . . . to inquire about borrowing AT devices, ask for help solving an AT problem, or request that an IPAT staff member contact you.

### Go to our Facebook page - IPAT North Dakota Assistive Technology

. . . . . to find out more about assistive technology, leave a comment, or stay up-to-date with IPAT activities.

### Check out our Blog - [ndipat.org/blog](http://ndipat.org/blog)

. . . . . to learn about a wide range of AT topics, engage in AT conversations, or suggest content that you would like to see us post.



## ADDITIONAL SERVICES



### Home First Services

Let IPAT help you focus on one important, but often overlooked way to make your home workable as abilities change - assistive technology!

- Visit our Home First Showroom in Fargo to determine which AT devices may help you remain home safely
- Go to the App Store and search for the "NDiPat" app. Download IPAT's Home First Showroom app for the iPad, then explore AT devices through our app's virtual tour
- Contact us to discuss an onsite AT assessment for your home

## CONTRACTED SERVICES



With our organization's dedicated focus on assistive technology and staff's AT expertise, state and private entities contract with us to deliver AT-related services in a cost-effective manner.

### Examples of IPAT contracted services:

- Statewide assistive safety device distribution service for residents 60 years and older;
- ND's free, specialized telecommunications equipment programs;
- AT assessments;
- AT trainings for individuals, non-profit organizations, private entities, and state agencies

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IS...



Devices . . . "to include any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities."

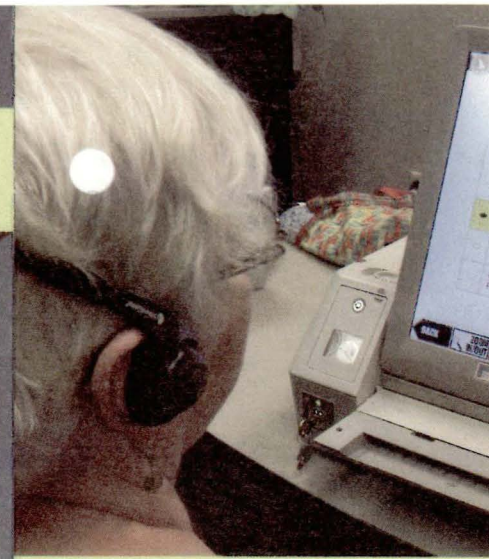
Think: iPads with apps to help individuals with disabilities communicate, see, organize, read and/or learn; personal amplification systems; text-to-speech or voice recognition software for a computer; automated medication dispensers; and hand controls for a vehicle.

Services . . . "any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device."

Think: AT assessment, help in purchasing, designing products, leasing devices, coordinating therapies, and AT training for individuals, family members, and professionals.

Remember, IPAT provides direct AT problem-solving services to help individuals, family members and professional staff improve:

- AT outcomes
- AT services
- AT management
- AT policy



# IPAT

Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

IPAT delivers a range of services so people with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging can get the assistive technology they need in the classroom, the community, at work, and to remain in their home.

Connect with us to get help with your AT service needs:

- Toll-free line (800) 895-4728
- Email [ipatinfo@ndipat.org](mailto:ipatinfo@ndipat.org)
- Website [ndipat.org](http://ndipat.org)
- Blog [ndipat.org/blog](http://ndipat.org/blog)
- Facebook IPAT North Dakota Assistive Technology

D. B

January 30, 2015

SB 2289  
attach #1  
testimony #1

Dear Senate Appropriations Committee Members:

I write to you regarding SB 2289 and funding for IPAT. I am a speech-language pathologist (SLP) in Bismarck, and have worked as an SLP in North Dakota for 7 years in long term care. IPAT has been an instrumental asset for the residents of the nursing homes I have worked in. I have turned to them on numerous occasions for their knowledge, resources, and equipment rental. With using IPAT as a resource, it has not only saved money for the patients and patient's families, but also for the Medicare/Medicaid system.

For example, in 2008, I was able rent a speech generating device for a patient following a stroke in which the resident's communication was impacted both receptively and expressively. The device rental, which was only \$20, saved the family a \$10,000 purchase of this device, and assisted us in determining a speech generating device that was more effective and less costly in increasing this patient's communication.

Just recently, I consulted with IPAT on a voice activated telecommunication system for multiple residents, and was able to collaborate and decide on a low cost, simple solution which required less training for the patient and less intervention with speech therapy, which decreases amount needed to bill Medicare, Medicaid, or other insurance companies. Because of IPAT's expertise, these residents are able to communicate independently with loved ones on the phone.

IPAT is an important program that is able to provide a voice and communication options to those who need it. I have seen a growth for the need for assistive technology as technology improves and is ever changing. IPAT has the knowledge and experience to continue to assist families and professionals in meeting the needs and advocating for individuals who have needs requiring the use of assistive technology.

Please support the IPAT funding in SB 2289, and I sincerely thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,  
Andrea Leftwich, M.S. CCC-SLP

E. /



January 30, 2015

RE: SB 2289

SB 2289  
attch # F  
testimony # 1

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of SB 2289. I am a physical therapist here in the Bismarck-Mandan area, working primarily with children with various disabilities and their families. Our therapy department has had a very close working relationship with IPAT for the past several years. With all the rapid changes in technology and adapted equipment, it is difficult for therapists to keep up with what is the newest device. We have consulted with staff at IPAT and have borrowed/loaned various equipment items from them. By using the resources of IPAT, we are able to ensure that the equipment we recommend for our patients/families is functional, practical and affordable for the child and the family. It gives us and the child/family a chance to trial the equipment and become familiar with it prior to purchasing it. This helps us avoid unnecessary expense to the family and/or the insurance companies because we have already determined that the device we are recommending really is what is best for the child/family at the time.

IPAT has always been easily accessible and willing to work with us and our patients. If their resources were not available to us, patients/families/insurance companies would be paying for equipment that does not work for the child/family. The IPAT staff is able to keep current with the constantly changing assistive technology development. They have equipment available for a variety of needs for people with disabilities or those who are aging. This includes AT for vision, hearing, mobility, communication, cognition, memory and many combinations of those. These services are available for all ages and any type of disability, including cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injuries, macular degeneration, etc.

In conclusion, I would ask that you support SB 2289 to provide additional funding for IPAT, to offset decreases in federal funding and to assist in continuing to build a statewide AT program to meet increasing demands across the state of North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bahe, PT, MPT

F. 1



**SANFORD**  
HEALTH2289  
# G

testimony 1

01/29/2015

Senator Ralph Kilzer  
District 47 (Bismarck)  
Chair, Subcommittee  
Senate Appropriations  
Department of Human Services

Dear Senator Kilzer:

My name is Kevin P. Murphy, MD, and I am the Medical Director for Pediatric Rehabilitation at Sanford, Bismarck Rehabilitation Center. This letter is in support of SB2289. As you may know, SB2289 is in reference to IPAT, a unique and solitary entity serving assistive technology needs for all people with disabilities in the State of North Dakota. IPAT serves North Dakotans who have lost vision, hearing, cognition, mobility, memory, communication, or combinations thereof across the lifespan. Services include helping children succeed in school by providing teachers with the proper assistive technology equipment. IPAT also supports people who work by matching their needs and assistive technology to the worksite. Many seniors are kept out of nursing homes and supported in their home living environment through the assistance of assistive technology and IPAT.

IPAT faces a 12% (\$163,000) decrease in Federal funding which is significant to impact services delivered within the State of North Dakota. There is a higher demand for assistive technology services, particularly in the State and the western quadrants with the oil industry. The oil industry has brought many new families into northwestern North Dakota, as you are well aware, adding many individuals, particularly children, with assistive technology needs. SB2289 requests \$500,000 through this legislative session to offset the Federal funding decrease and build a statewide assistive technology infrastructure to meet statewide citizen demands. Through our practice here at the Pediatric Rehabilitation Center in Bismarck, we see many children from around the State with assistive technology needs. Often these children will have congenital conditions, such as muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, genetic deficiencies, such that they cannot communicate in a natural, effective way. With IPAT services involved, they are able to interface and dialogue comfortably within their academic, home, community,

**SANFORD**  
HEALTH


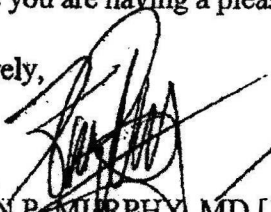
recreational, and work environments. When your brain has been injured or you are lacking anatomy in your airways, mouth, or throat, you simply cannot make words. Often limbs are twisted and lack the ability to make effective signs and other physical communications. The only possibility of communicating with the outside world is through optimal assistive technology. Without IPAT here in North Dakota, there would be no other trained, competent, and medically accessible provider for these assistive technology services.

Please remember that anyone can all of a sudden have a child or adult with special needs become a part of their family. Many of these children are born through spontaneous genetic mutations or have acquired their disability or impairments through their early developmental years. We should all recognize that it just takes 1 fall off a ladder or an assault in a parking garage for each of us to immediately require the most precious and valuable services that IPAT provides.

Thank you for your time and attention. My encouragement is strong toward your support of SB2289. Please call me personally on my cell phone if further questions or issues arise (218-260-7009).

I hope you are having a pleasant winter.

Sincerely,



KEVIN P. MURPHY, MD [1003743]  
PEDIATRIC PHYSIATRIST  
PEDIATRIC PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION

44046: jp/8922364/9216448  
DD: 01/29/2015 17:02:25 CST  
DT: 01/29/2015 18:03:40 CST



**University of Mary**  
America's Leadership University

DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

SB 2289  
Attached #4  
testimony #1

Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee,

I am Dr. Carol Olson, an Associate Professor in the Occupational Therapy education program at the University of Mary. I would like to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those who are aging and people with disabilities.

The North Dakota Interagency Project for Assistive Technology (NDIPAT) has been extremely instrumental in my efforts to teach future occupational therapists and educators about assistive technology (AT). I have been having my students visit the IPAT center in Bismarck for the past 16 years to hear about the services and to explore some of the available technology. Here, they have been able to hear about the services provided by this organization (Assistive Technology demonstration center for individuals to see various types of technology available for persons with disabilities; AT swap shop to reuse/redistribute equipment that is no longer needed by one person, and try to get it to someone who does need it; assistance in accessing funding for various AT needs, and a rental/trial system for persons to try equipment before expending significant funds to purchase something that may not work). After graduation, these students are then able to share this information and resource with their colleagues and clients.

I have also used this service personally to identifying appropriate equipment to help my father live more independently and with a higher quality of life. We were able to explore various hearing amplification systems, telephones, and magnification systems to compensate for his macular degeneration and hearing loss.

These services are extremely important, and may not be available elsewhere. And although expensive, putting finances towards this type of project could actually save the state, insurance companies, and individual's money in not purchasing something that may not work for the individual or by forcing people to move out of their own homes and to a nursing home where they would have the needed assistance. These services are not currently available elsewhere, so it is very important to continue funding NDIPAT.

I ask that you approve SB 2289 and allow this valuable service to continue in our state. Thank you.

*Carol Olson*

Carol Olson, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA  
Department of Occupational Therapy  
University of Mary  
7500 University Dr.  
Bismarck, ND 58504

pl. 1

Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am David Valenzuela, a Minerals Manager with the USDA Forest Service, husband, and father to two young adults, one of which has special needs (cerebral palsy). I am asking you to support Senate Bill 2289, which would provide assistive technology services for all North Dakotans.

Our family has adapted to the needs of a child with cerebral palsy, and we could not have made some of those adaptations without the help of specialists. Trained assistive technology specialists have been able to assess our family situation and provide us the best options for how to solve very basic life support problems.

As our daughter, Katelyn, has grown into a beautiful 19 year old young lady, so has her body weight (145 lbs.). My wife, Deanne, and I have reached our 50's and our balance, strength, and backs just cannot safely care for Katelyn without the help of assistive technology. At this point, bathing Katelyn safely is the most critical need we have. We decided to reach out to IPAT for help and were very satisfied with the level of professional services we received.

IPAT came to our home and assessed options for safely bathing Katelyn. Currently, two people must carry her from the bedroom to the bathroom, step into the tub, and set her down in a special chair. We do this in reverse to get her back into bed for dressing, only this time the tub and floor can be wet and slippery. Given the small size of our bathroom, there is no possible way to lift properly, so my back gives out and we run the risk of slipping on the wet surfaces.

IPAT's recommendations have led to a decision to install a lift system that will safely transfer Katelyn from her wheelchair and into and out of the tub. Hopefully, the lift will be installed by the end of February. We are grateful for IPAT's help in solving this problem, but they did not stop there. They also assessed ways to make Katelyn more independent around the home through the use of automatic door openers, touchless faucets and light switches, threshold ramps, etc. With the knowledge and credibility of IPAT, we were successful in portraying the need for these items, all of which will improve her quality of life.

If IPAT were not available to assess our situation and make recommendations for assistive technology, we do not know who else could have helped us. We have struggled throughout the years to find the right technology to meet Katelyn's challenges for every-day living. We sincerely wish we had turned to IPAT earlier, as it truly would have improved our entire family's quality of life.



They provide a critical, personalized service that leads to customized solutions, improving the health and safety of families and increasing individual independence. I know IPAT provides these services in many different settings and for young and old alike. These services are integral for keeping families together and individuals out of care facilities.

Senate Bill 2289 would support a higher quality of life for North Dakota families, and the need for continued support of these essential services has to have increased with the exploding population in the western part of the state. I ask you to please support this Bill.

Our family thanks you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



David M. Valenzuela  
PO Box 2345  
Watford City, ND 58854  
701-444-3283  
dvalen321@gmail.com

Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

2

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, my name is Bob Puyear. I serve on IPAT's Board of Directors, and on IPAT's Consumer Advisory Council. More importantly, I am a husband, living at home with my wife Shirley. Due to her foresight, and the help of assistive technology devices I am able to remain in my home, and that is why I am here today to ask for your support of Senate Bill 2289.

I would like to see other North Dakotans experiencing the effects of aging as well as those of us with disabilities remain at home with assistive technology. IPAT knows how to help people do that through their Home First Showroom. I would like to allot my remaining testimony time to Peggy Shireley from IPAT to take the committee on a virtual tour of the Home First Showroom.

Robert Puyear  
305 Remington Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-224-8474

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Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

3

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, my name is Denise Arntson. I work for American Bank Center. I have also been involved with the non-profit organization Rebuilding Together Greater Bismarck Mandan since 1997. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 to provide assistive technology services for the elderly and people with disabilities provided by IPAT.

It has been my privilege to serve in various capacities with Rebuilding Together (RT), whose goal is to keep low income homeowners at home safely. Peggy Shireley, Senior AT Consultant for IPAT has been a partner in this work.

When we visit with homeowners about their needs, their responses generally start with something like: I no longer use the shower because I can't step into the bathtub; or I don't lock my doors because it is too painful with my arthritis. We look to IPAT to work with these homeowners, and they find solutions. It may be an over the tub safety rail, or something more "high-tech" such as remote control door locks. IPAT consistently provides information and tools to help people remain independent. The work IPAT has done with over 40 homeowners in the RT projects has helped these people remain safely in their homes - - - for years. Nursing home care can cost up to \$7000 a month creating great financial strains. With IPAT's outreach we have delayed and decreased the need for government assistance for these low income citizens while they stay in their homes longer and spend less time in nursing home facilities.

On a more personal level, my great-aunt Alice, was a courageous survivor who walked with a leg brace and cane following a stroke at age 50. Nearing 90, she considered moving out of her

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home. In assessing options, the facility with self-closing apartment doors was immediately eliminated. Alice moved slowly and that self-closing door could knock her right over. I visited with Peggy and learned about electric door openers specifically made and installed for homes and apartment doors. Who knew!!! This technology could literally open doors and options for Alice.

IPAT provides options. The assistance that IPAT offers allows people to remain safe as they navigate through life; it allows them to continue to take an active role in their personal care and to maintain that can-do attitude so prevalent in North Dakota. IPAT is a source of information and equipment - - - but mostly it is a source of hope and dignity. None of us likes to be a burden on others. What a gift IPAT gives to our North Dakota friends and family.

I would like to ask each of you for your support for SB 2289 and I thank you for your time.

Denise Arntson  
1223 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-400-0135



Senate Appropriations Committee  
SB 2289  
February 2, 2015

4

Chairman Holmberg and members of the Senate Appropriations, good morning and thank you for hearing my testimony today. My name is Cari Duncan. My husband and I live in Sawyer, ND. We have three children, all boys, and each of them have varying degrees of disabilities.

The IPAT program is facing a 12% decrease in federal funding, and that scares me. A decrease in funds will impact IPAT's ability to provide needed services to individuals, like my boys, and at a time when there is a documented need for more services, especially in the Western part of our state.

Our testimony includes our 9 year old son, Sam. He's a boy that loves music, his dad's meatloaf and keeping family secrets on caramel roll recipes. Sam has average intelligence but also has Autism, ADHD, a learning disability, sensory processing disability, dyslexia and restless leg syndrome. He also struggles with long term and short term memory. Through all of that, Sam was showing signs that he could be more independent by using AT devices and we were ultimately led to IPAT, which is the only resource in the state that specializes in assistive technology.

IPAT was able to use doctor evaluations and school reports to gain an understanding of Sam's strengths and weaknesses and then took the time to

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personally meet him and work together to explore AT devices that would help him do his school work. We agreed on solutions that worked for Sam, to include specialized iPad apps for reading and writing, and a watch that tracks time visually. The use of these devices helps him be a more independent reader and writer. They decrease his dependency on a classroom aide and they help him to pay attention both at school and at home. I know that the IPAT staff are available to me, to Sam's teachers, and his related service staff to talk over ideas, concerns and address needs that assistive technology may be part of solving.

We understand that many people may not relate to or understand our children's disabilities and their needs, but we know that IPAT does. My son feels empowered when he's self-sufficient, and IPAT wants to help others with similar struggles who may be people with chronic illnesses, those who have been in an accident, born with disabilities, or those who are aging and just need a little help to stay home. IPAT's expertise makes large and small differences in all of our communities by helping the people who live there find and use assistive technology. We all want to be productive members of society, and we want our sons to be as independent and productive as possible; IPAT can help us do that.

I am currently the chair of our local autism support group in Minot, and I am participating in Partners in Policymaking. My husband and I recently became

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members of the IPAT consumer advisory council. We hope the addition of our voices in our communities will help make services for people with disabilities matter, including assistive technology services.

Thanks for your time.

Cari Duncan  
401 Vine Street W  
Sawyer, ND 58781  
701-624-2184

4.3

Senate Appropriations Committee Members  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

#5

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Melissa Taylor, a full time professor in physical therapy at the University of Mary. I am here today representing Mary Dockter, Director of the University of Mary's Program in Physical Therapy, to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

I am in support of funding assistive technology services for 2 main reasons. First, the ND Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) has been highly supportive and collaborative in the education of our physical therapy students. It is imperative that our students recognize the valuable services IPAT provides to assist people with disabilities and the aging population with functional and community mobility and the ability to stay in their homes. Our students learn first-hand what is available, how to access, and then apply assistive technology in clinical situations.

Secondly, and more importantly, as a healthcare provider for both people with disabilities and aging adults, I have witnessed first-hand the incredible value of assistive technology in assisting people with employment, active

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participation in education and in the community, and in the ability to be safe in their homes. IPAT is able to provide high and low tech assistive devices such as computer access and mobility solutions, to assistive technology services such as coordination of services and evaluation of individual needs. Without these services, many individuals would not be safe living in their homes, would not be active and participative community members, and would not be financially independent as they would not gain employment. IPAT is our go-to service.

Therefore, I strongly support passage of SB 2289 to fund assistive technology services. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mary Dockter, PT, PhD  
Fellow of the APTA Education Leadership Institute  
Professor and Chair, Department of Physical Therapy  
University of Mary  
Bismarck, ND 58504

Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Michael Keller, a person with disabilities. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those who are aging and people with disabilities.

I am here this morning because this bill is important to me. More specifically, IPAT is important to me. My story is a little bit different, actually a lot different from many that you will hear today. I was not born with a disability nor have I lived most of my life disabled. When I was 49 years old, just over six years ago, I suffered a stroke while at work in Grand Forks. Since then my right arm, hand and fingers quit working properly. I cannot bend my fingers and have limited strength in my right hand and arm. I have significant balance and other issues as well. As a result, I have not been able to work full time since January 7, 2009 or at all since February 2010.

After trying occupational and hand therapy, more than 15 medications, acupuncture, pain injections and an experimental brain surgery and clinical trial at Cleveland Clinic, my condition has not improved. I am still right handed; but my right hand does not work. I have lost my fine motor skills and am in constant pain.

In April 2014, my rehabilitation counselor at Vocational Rehabilitation referred me to IPAT for an assistive technology assessment – two terms I had not heard of before. I met Peggy at IPAT's AT device demonstration center here in Bismarck. During my

6

assessment, I was able to try a number of AT options for computer access, ergonomics and worksite accommodations, including note taking and telephone usage.

IPAT's demonstration center afforded me the opportunity to explore a variety of non-traditional devices that I would not have otherwise known about. The assessment report prepared for me by IPAT gives me greater confidence with prospective employers when I am trying to re-enter the work force. Without the services of IPAT and its' AT device demonstration center, I would be less comfortable discussing my abilities while looking for a job.

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I would appreciate your support for SB 2289. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Michael Keller  
827 N 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-215-1513

Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Mary Rebenitsch, a retired home care nurse. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

For a number of years, IPAT has been one of my best resources in providing home safety for seniors living alone. It has provided safety alert systems that are simple to operate, an immediate call to family and friends in an emergency, not charging a burdensome monthly cost to elders on a fixed income. It has provided secure medication dispensers with a lock to prevent overdose and alarm to remind the forgetful to take their medications, saving man hours and preventing accidental overdoses.

It has provided hearing and vision assisted phones to the visually and hearing impaired, with large numbers, lights and readouts of incoming calls, plus adjustable volume past what is readily available. One forgetful, 92 year-old, both hearing and vision impaired, with whom I communicate regularly on her IPAT phone, answers an incoming call with, "Just a minute while I push the blue button." That blue button gives her a volume boost that makes communication possible.



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None of these systems are available in the commercial market in the economical form that IPAT provides. Many of the people in my personal experience who receive services from IPAT would not be able to afford what they hear advertised on TV, nor would they be able to do the shopping needed, so these, plus many other devices that IPAT provides, allow seniors to stay in their homes independently. They would otherwise need a higher level of care at much more cost to the state.

Thank you for hearing my request for support of SB2289, asking for a little money to save a lot.

Mary Rebenitsch  
105 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Mandan, ND 58554  
701-667-1923

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Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

#7

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Shirley Ryberg, the Business Manager for the Burleigh County Special Education Unit, Naughton School District, Sterling School District and Menoken School District, and I am here today to ask you to support Senate Bill 2289 to maintain assistive technology services for all North Dakotans.

There is a higher demand for assistive technology services across the state, particularly in the western counties. In the Bismarck Office alone, IPAT needs additional staff members. Along with the needed addition of staff members, there are also operational costs to meet the increased demand.

In both the regular and special education segments of education, we have utilized the services of IPAT. IPAT provides assessments to students who are in need of assistive technology, and makes recommendations for the technology needed to enhance that particular students' ability to learn.

In the educational field, not only are we aware of the services that IPAT provides, but both the educational facility and the parents are able to utilize IPAT's demonstration centers, loan library, used equipment and financial loan programs. IPAT helps children succeed in school by providing teachers

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assistance in finding the right assistive technology; thereby saving state resources.

IPAT also supports people at work by matching their needs for assistive technology at their worksite. IPAT keeps seniors out of nursing homes by supporting their needs for safety and assistance through assistive technology in their homes. On a personal level, my husband uses a specific medication dispenser that alerts him to take his medicine that was recommended by IPAT. I have also called on IPAT staff on numerous occasions with questions about friends of mine, or individuals I am acquainted with, who were in need of assistive technology.

I could go on and on because I am very aware of the services IPAT provides and those services are too numerous to list. IPAT serves North Dakotans who have losses in vision, hearing, cognition, mobility, memory, communication, or combination thereof, of all ages across the entire state.

I will once again ask you to support SB 2289 to support assistive technology services for all North Dakotans. We don't know when the time may come when we will need one of those services.

Shirley Ryberg  
11600 - 123<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-391-0166

Senate Appropriations  
Senate Bill 2289  
February 2, 2015

# 9

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, my name is Eugenie Lang and I am a retired registered nurse. I am here to ask you to support SB 2289 for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

Please let me tell you what IPAT has done for me. In 2009 I was diagnosed with a pituitary tumor. The pituitary gland is located at the base of the brain and next to several very important structures. My tumor grew so fast that my optic nerves sustained permanent damage, leaving me legally blind. The tumor was removed, but the impact to my life has continued on and on. Having never needed services before, I did not know what was available to help me. IPAT showed me ways to continue to read for pleasure, to determine the time, to read medication labels, to read food labels and so many more things. IPAT has allowed me to feel safe in my own home.

The most important assistive technology I learned about was a voting machine. I helped test this new product, which I could use without any other assistance. This machine helped me to vote by reading the ballot to me, and once my vote was complete it helped me by filling in the little ovals – a task many voters take for granted, but is something which is not attainable for an individual who is legally blind. IPAT literally changed my life.

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I ask you to support SB2289 and help many North Dakota Citizens to remain productive members of society. Thank you for your time and I am pleased to be here in person to tell you how important IPAT is to the citizens of this state.

Eugenie Lang  
709 West Interstate Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58803  
701-751-1101

9.2

Senate Appropriations Committee  
Senate Bill SB 2289  
February 2, 2015

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Betty Cariveau. I am a Bismarck homemaker who just celebrated my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. I am here today to support Senate Bill 2289 requesting funding for the support of assistive technology services for those that are aging and disabled.

I live alone in my own home and I want to stay there as long as I can. As a person who is deaf, IPAT has helped me to realize that dream. They did that by helping me find a phone that I could use that amplifies sound loud enough so I can hear it. This phone was a life-saver, it allowed me to care for my husband who had severe disabilities, because I could call for an ambulance when he needed immediate care. When he was hospitalized the nurses could also call me when my presence was needed at the hospital. I don't know what I would have done without it.

The technology on my phone has also allowed me to continue to live alone, it is my lifeline to friends and family. Without it I would be so isolated, but with it I am never alone. I can get help when I need it. There are many people just like me that need IPAT to help them find the devices that will work for them. IPAT has always served me well, and without them, where would I go. They are a big plus.

Thank you very much.

Betty Cariveau  
1420 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND  
701-223-4479

# / /

## Senate Appropriations Committee

SB 2289

FEB 2, 2015

I'm Cindy Vollmer. I'd like to speak on behalf of SB 2289. I have been involved with the Interagency Project for Assistive Technology (IPAT) since its inception in 1993. I served on the first Consumer Advisor Committee. I have the highest regard for the services IPAT provides to our State. IPAT has over the course of the past 22 years, with a very limited staff (2 administrative and 4 regional coordinators) and a minimal budget, reached every region of our State. This is the only group that addresses the assistive technology needs of all North Dakota citizens, birth through death, across all disabilities. The only focus of IPAT is assistive technology. Many agencies and schools look to IPAT for solutions to the AT needs of our citizens. Some of the areas addressed are the enhancement of a person's ability to live more independently, remain at home, advance their education, give them a voice through augmentative communication, as well as help find low or high tech AT to help them have opportunities for recreation and enjoy leisure time. There has not been a request for State dollars many years. However, due to the recent decrease in Federal funding, a small amount of State money is needed to keep IPAT funded at its current level and a small increase to better serve the western part of our State. These dollars are critical so IPAT can continue to provide the services they have been doing for North Dakota citizens for the past 22 years. Please consider funding this bill in full so IPAT can continue to work with all citizens of North Dakota as well as all the agencies that depend on their expertise.

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Real Possibilities in

12

# North Dakota

SB 2289- SUPPORT  
Assistive Technology and Devices Funding  
February 2, 2015  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Josh Askvig - AARP North Dakota  
[jaskvig@aarp.org](mailto:jaskvig@aarp.org) or 701-989-0129

Chairman Holmberg, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am Josh Askvig, Associate State Director of Advocacy for AARP North Dakota.

Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, a retired educator and AARP's founder, became an activist in the 1940s when she found a retired teacher living in a chicken coop because she could afford nothing else. Dr. Andrus couldn't ignore the need for health and financial security in America and set the wheels in motion for what would become AARP. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization with 85,000 members in North Dakota and 38 million nationwide. We understand the priorities and dreams of people 50-plus and are committed to helping them live life to the fullest, including here in North Dakota.

I am here to express support for SB 2289: which provides an appropriation to the Department of Human Services for assistive technology services. As you may know, assistive technology service providers face \$163,000 (12%) decrease in federal funding which is significant enough to impact the services they will be able to provide. Additionally, as you heard, there is a higher demand for assistive technology services across the state, particularly in the western counties. There is a need to add staff and operational costs to meet this demand.

The number one concern of North Dakotans as they age is how they can safely stay in their homes as long as possible. Assistive technology services keep older North Dakotans out of nursing homes by supporting their needs for safety and assistance

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at home. The funding in this bill will ensure that North Dakotans with assistive technology services needs can continue to live independent productive lives. SB 2289 will serve North Dakotans who have losses in vision, hearing, cognition, mobility, memory, communication or combination thereof, of all ages, across the entire state.

We ask you to give a DO Pass Recommendation to SB 2289.

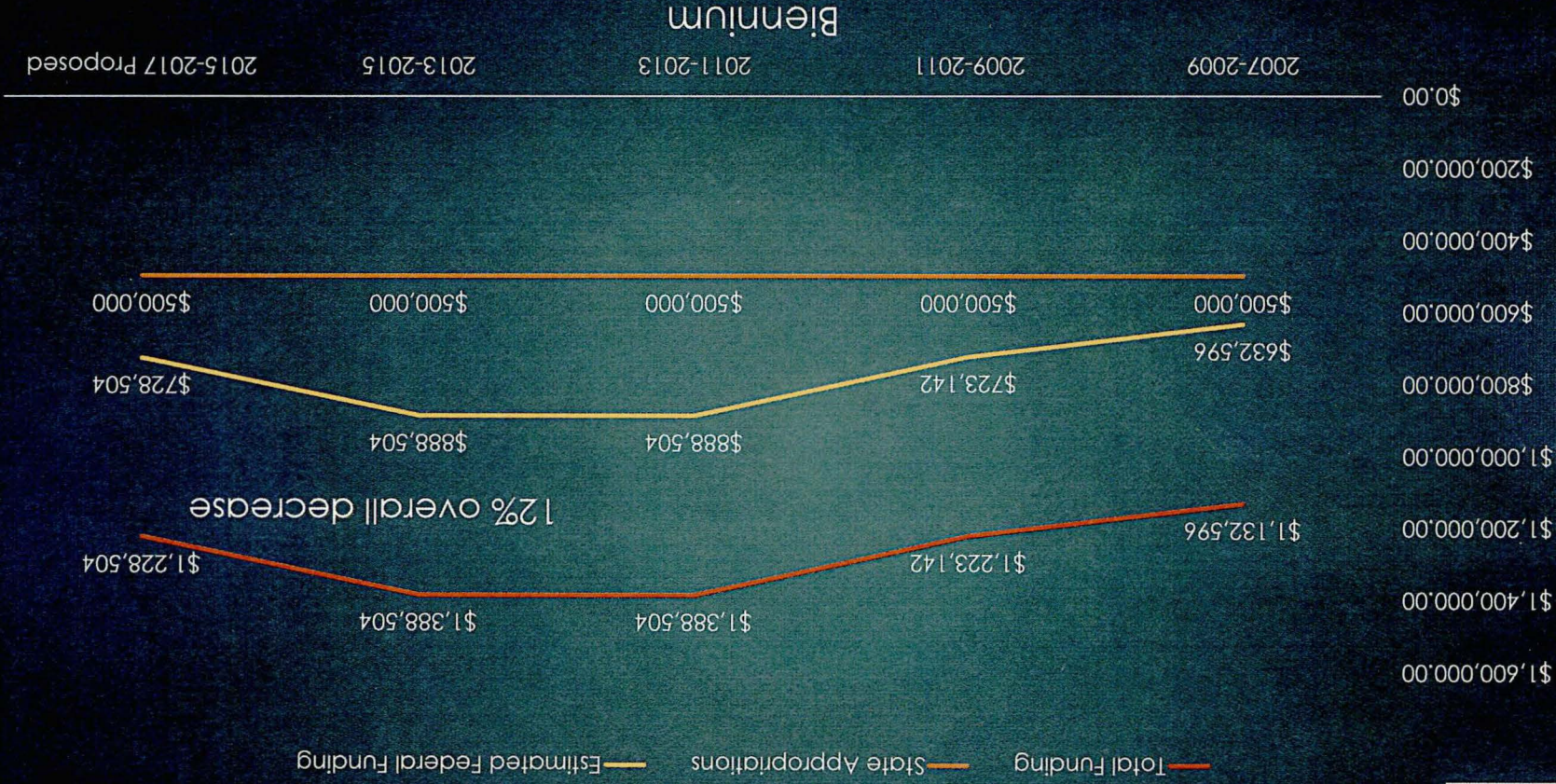
**House Human Services  
January 21, 2015  
SB 2289  
Testimony by Denise Harvey  
Protection and Advocacy Project**

P&A supports the funding requested for IPAT-Interagency Program for Assistive Technology to provide services and supports to meet the Assistive Technology needs of individuals with disabilities. P&A is aware of the need for additional funding, both to operate this essential program and to increase services in the Western part of the state. Assistive Technology plays a critical role for people with disabilities in creating and maintaining independence in all aspect of their lives. The use of assistive technology has been the key for many individuals in allowing persons to live independently, work, and to provide services related to important medical needs. IPAT provides an essential service in the state by providing evaluations, assistive technology loaning and expertise to meet the AT needs of North Dakota citizens. P&A sees the has seen these services being greatly needed for individuals with varying types of disabilities, in all age ranges, and in a wide variety of settings.





# IPAT Funding History Federal-State



# / Subtotal  
682685  
91-21-2



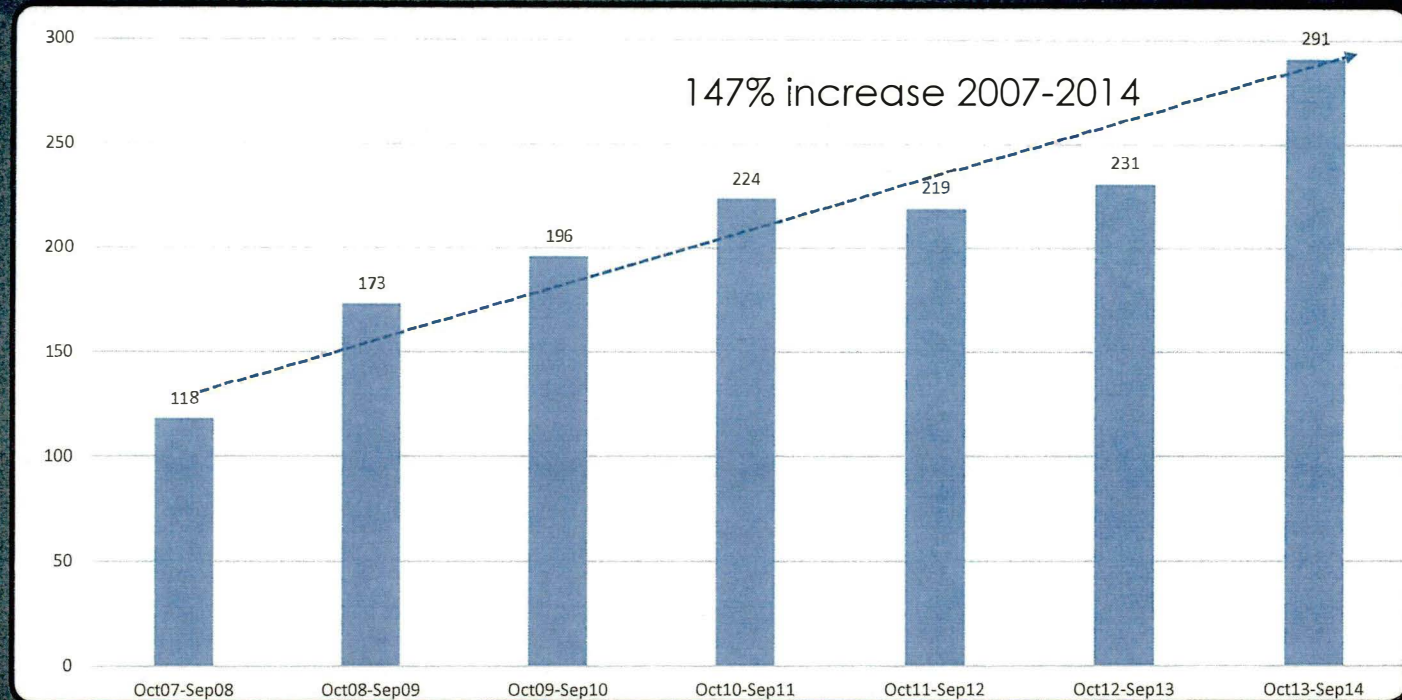


# Device Demonstration

## Outcomes...

99% of consumers surveyed said the demonstration helped them make the right purchasing decision.

Response rate to this survey was 100%.



Device demonstration places AT directly into the hands of consumers to help them make decisions on the right device, or no device at all.

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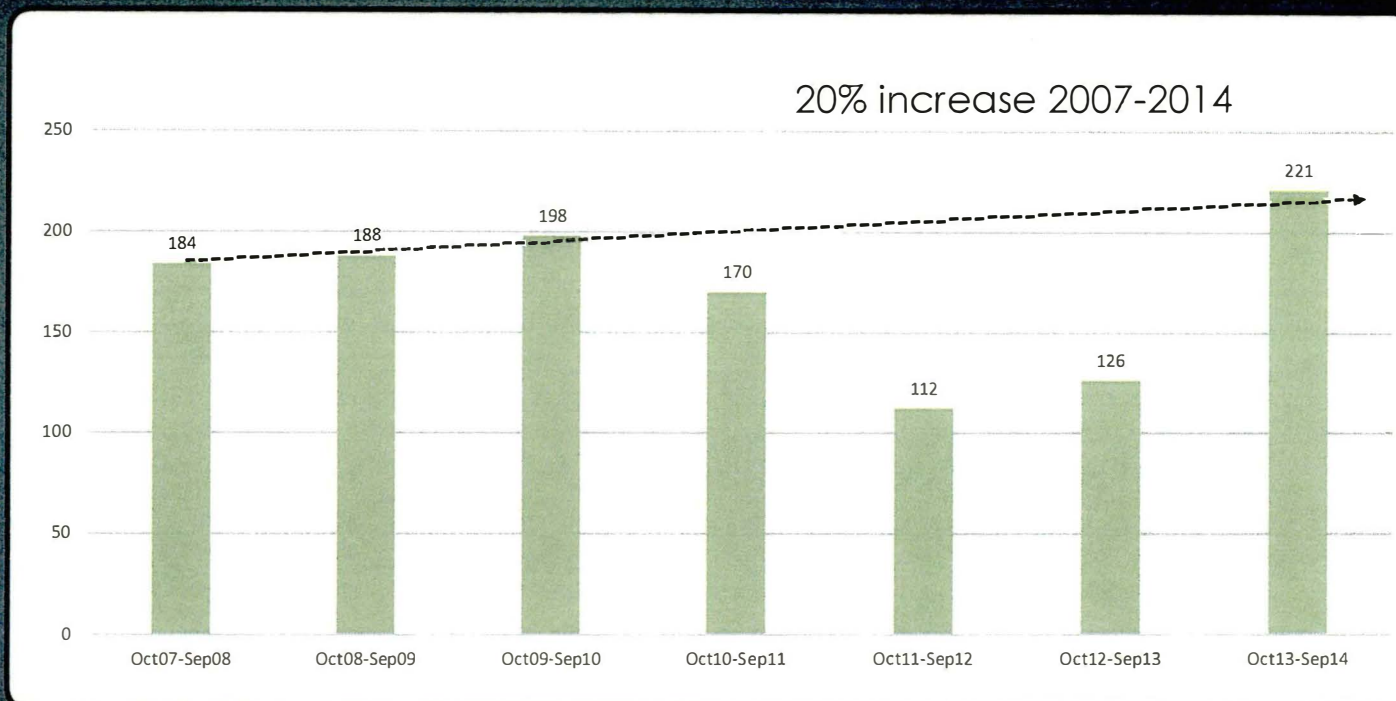


# Equipment Rental

## Outcomes...

95% of respondents indicated that the rental helped them make the right purchasing decision.

Response rate to this survey is near 100%.



Equipment rentals provide a low cost way for consumers to try devices for a 60 day trial. This ensures that a good decision is made to use, or not to use, a particular device.





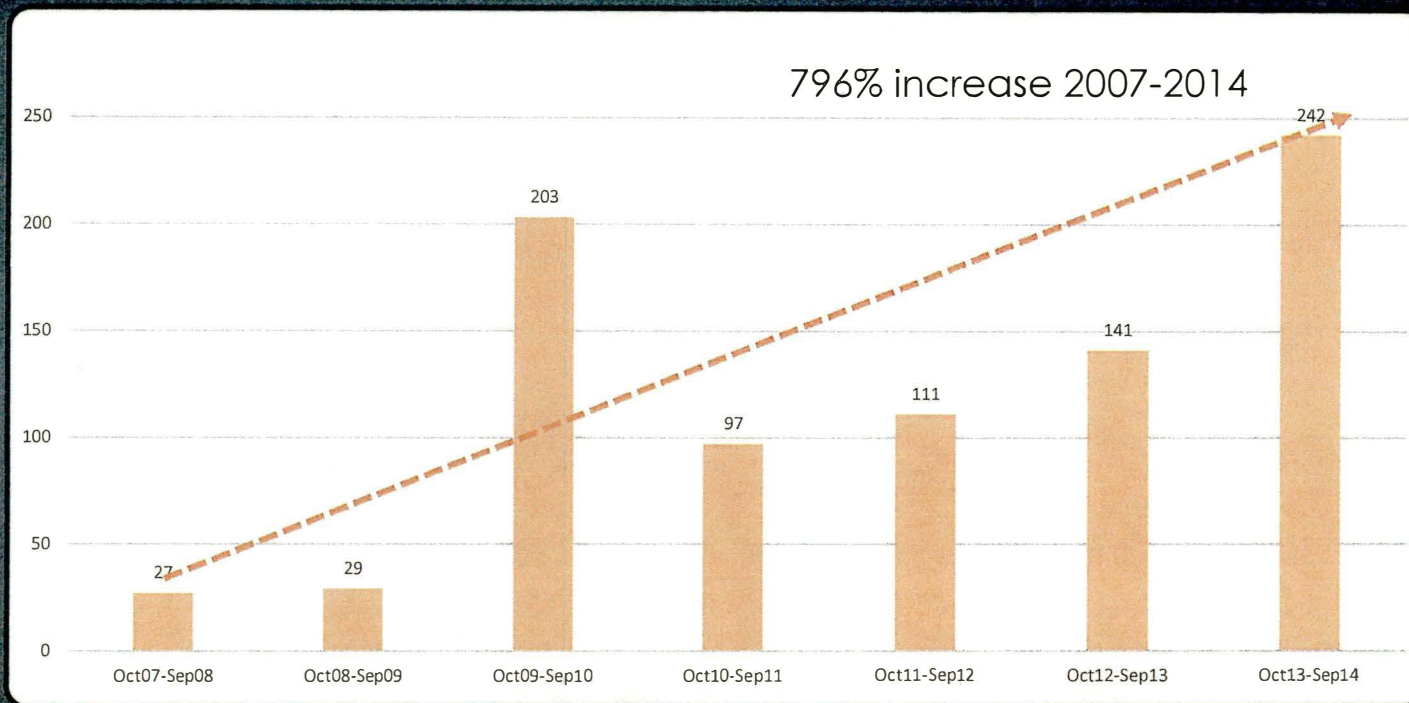
# Device Exchange

## Outcomes...

86% of respondents said they could not have obtained the device anywhere else.

Response rate from surveys is nearly 100%.

Device Exchange programs save thousands of dollars annually by connecting consumers who own devices no longer in use. IPAT has provided the means for people to make these connections.



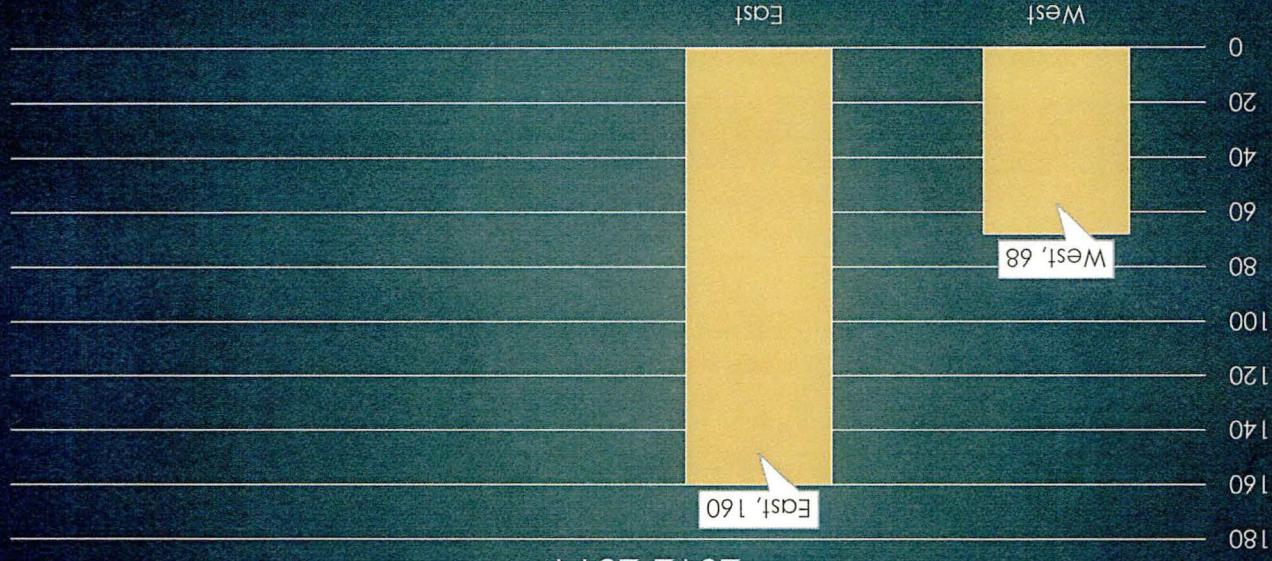
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# AT Access\_East v. West

## Awareness Matters

Public Awareness Events  
2012-2014



Access to AT tracks directly with IPAT's direct outreach awareness activities.



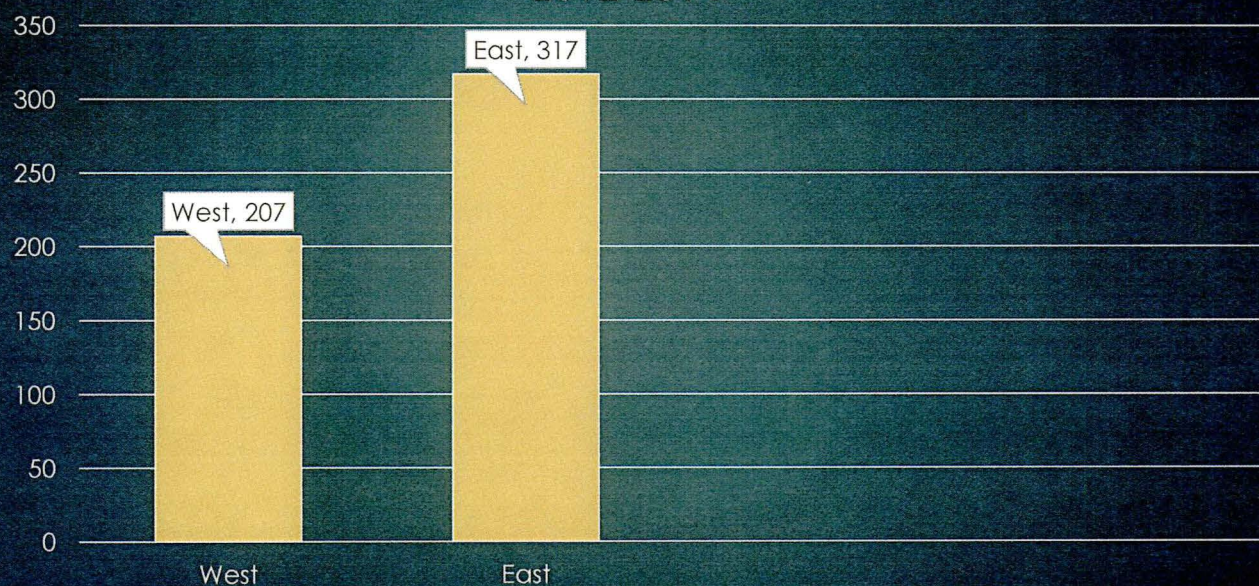
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# AT Access\_East v. West Awareness Matters

Device Demonstrations  
2012-2014



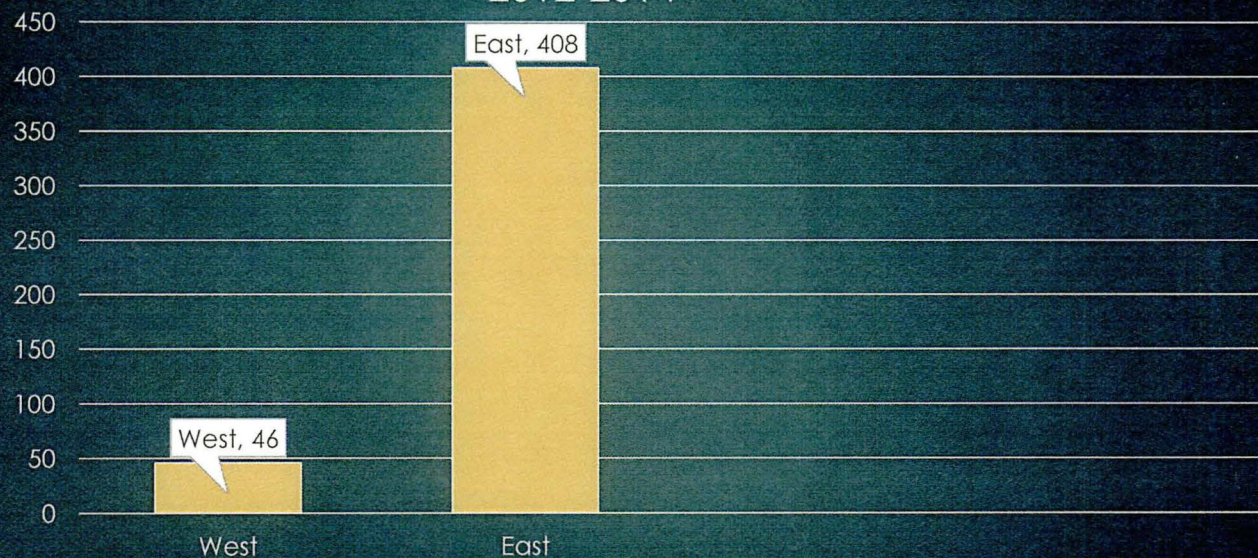
Note that the number of device demonstrations tracks closely to the amount of direct contact with IPAT staff.





# AT Access\_East v. West Awareness Matters

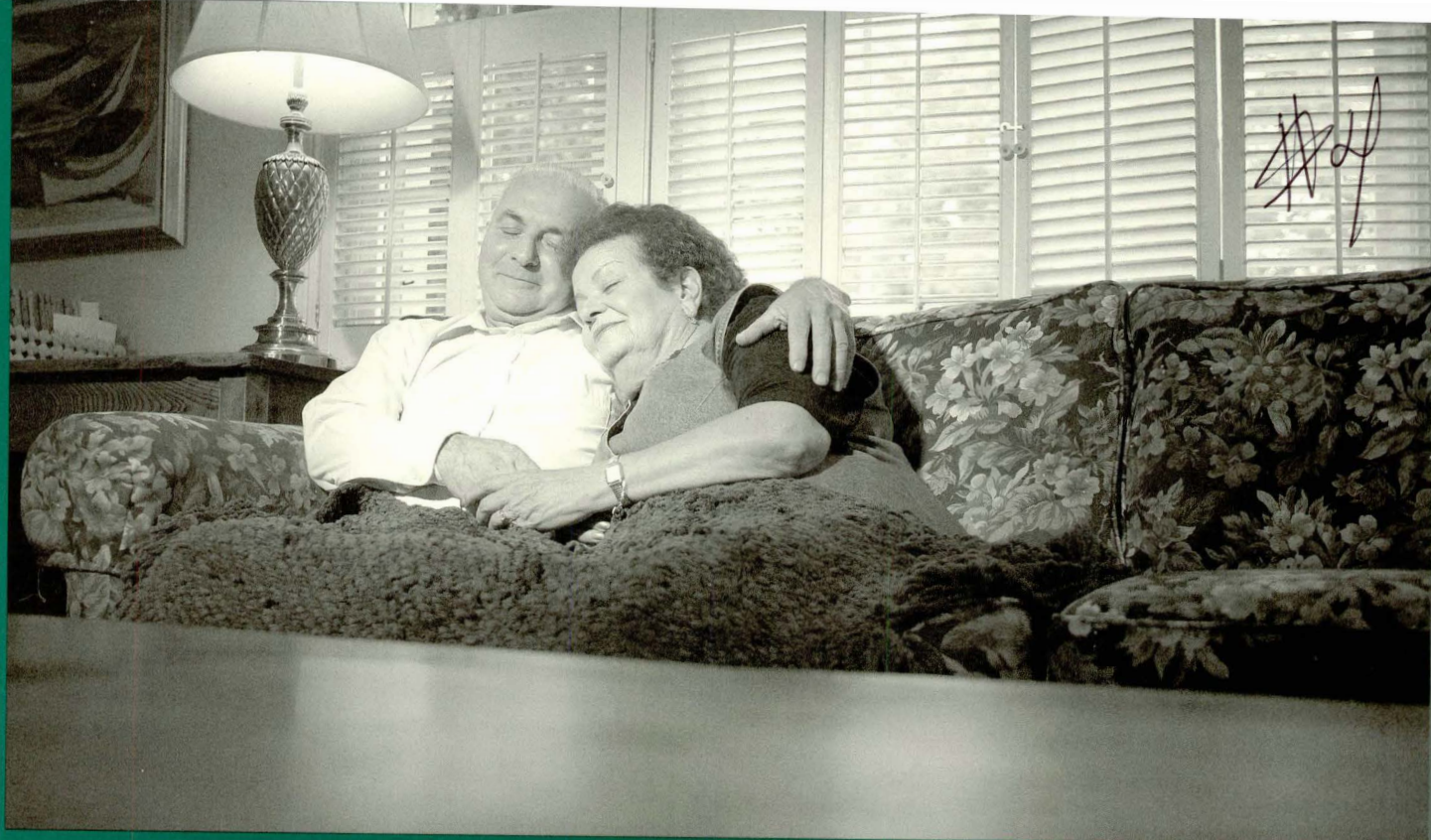
Equipment Rentals  
2012-2014



Note that the number of device rentals tracks closely to the amount of direct contact with IPAT staff.

6-6





SB 2289  
2-12-15  
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## Remaining at Home... *Priceless*

AN OUTCOME REPORT SPECIFIC TO THE ASSISTIVE  
TECHNOLOGY COMPONENT OF THE REAL CHOICE PROJECT,  
*NO PLACE LIKE HOME*



Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

NOTE: This is an older report, yet individuals' needs remain the same. Information that has changed: nursing and assisted living costs are up; more options for AT devices and costs are often down.

4-1



## *Real Choice Project - No Place Like Home*

In August of 2003, the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) was a partner in the Real Choice Project, *No Place Like Home*, funded by the Department of Human Services. One component of this project was to ensure a systematic exploration and delivery of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for state residents who were at risk of moving to an institution and/or those living in institutions. This outcome report addresses the particulars of the AT component delivered by IPAT.

It is widely recognized that individuals with disabilities and/or long term illnesses who are interested in remaining in their home or moving out of an institution need various types of support. Assistive technology is one of the essential support services for this population, and yet it is NOT widely recognized or acknowledged. Thus, the potential impact of AT devices and services goes unrealized. IPAT's role in this project was to make the AT option available to these individuals by providing the necessary AT services and purchasing the AT devices. The premise being that if AT devices and services are made available, the probability of remaining at home or returning to a less restrictive environment increases.

### *Delivering AT Services*

IPAT developed the Assistive Technology Client Profile Form as a tool to help identify potential AT needs of an individual. The form was designed as a checklist to be completed by individuals independently or with their family members and/or service providers. It required no prior knowledge of assistive technology and served as the referral tool for the project. The form identified potential AT needs in the areas of home safety, daily living, mobility, dexterity, communication, hearing, seeing, and problem solving tasks. Once completed, the forms were submitted to IPAT for review and follow-up.

IPAT selected applicants who wanted to delay or eliminate having to enter an institutional setting or had a desire to move to a less-restrictive environment. IPAT also sought to represent diversity in age, location, disability, and AT device needs in project participants. Upon receiving a referral which met project criteria, IPAT contacted the individual and/or family member to schedule an AT assessment. This typically involved meeting the individual in need of AT services at their residence, with family members and/or service providers present. The initial meeting started the AT assessment process where AT needs were identified and prioritized, based upon the individual's input. Subsequent onsite visits were scheduled to discuss, demonstrate, or try-out selected AT devices and/or home modification options to determine feature match and individual preferences. When final AT device choices were made, IPAT used *No Place Like Home* project dollars to purchase them.

Once the devices were purchased, IPAT provided the necessary AT follow-up services. These included delivery and set-up of the equipment, as well as specific training on the assistive technology devices, so that the individual recipients, family members and direct care providers would know how to use them.



### *Profile of the Participants*

The AT component of the *No Place Like Home* project met the AT device and service needs of 20 North Dakota residents with disabilities or long-term illnesses. The individuals represented 10 communities: Fargo, West Fargo, Bismarck, Mandan, Minot, Williston, Park River, Grafton, Wilton and Center. There were 12 women and 8 men, who ranged in age from mid-thirties to mid-eighties. One person resided in a group home, three were in apartments, and 16 lived in single family dwellings. The people served exhibited disabilities in the areas of hearing, mobility, blindness, quadriplegia, cognitive limitations as a result of traumatic brain injury, deafness, or had been diagnosed with long-term illnesses resulting in continued loss of abilities (multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease and rheumatoid arthritis).

IPAT's initial goal was to serve 15 people with the funds made available through the *No Place Like Home* project but was actually able to serve 20 people. A sampling of their stories follows.

## *Types of Assistive Technology Services Delivered*

IPAT provided the services necessary for the participants to select, obtain, and use the assistive technology needed to accomplish the activities they identified as priority. These services included: developing and administering a screening tool; completion of the assessment process; ordering and purchasing the equipment; set-up of the equipment in the individual's home; and necessary training specific to the devices purchased.

## *Types of Assistive Technology Devices Purchased*

A total of 45 assistive technology devices were purchased to help the participants remain living where they chose. These devices fell into six equipment categories: Home or Building Access; Vehicle/Vehicle Access; Seating, Positioning and Personal Mobility; Vision Equipment; Health, Safety and Daily Living Equipment; and Computer and Related Computer Access Equipment.

## *Costs of the Assistive Technology Components*

The total amount awarded to IPAT to complete the assistive technology activities identified in the *No Place Like Home* project was \$33,518.34. The following is a breakdown of expenditures.

Total Cost of AT Devices: \$13,625.<sup>84</sup>

Range of device cost per participant: \$153.<sup>13</sup> to \$1,624.<sup>00</sup>

Average AT device cost per participant: \$681.<sup>29</sup>

Total Cost of AT Services to participants: \$11,042.<sup>51</sup>

Range of AT service cost per participant: \$190.<sup>60</sup> to \$1,447.<sup>84</sup>

Average AT service cost per participant: \$552.<sup>12</sup>

Total Cost of General Training & Awareness: \$1,182.<sup>73</sup>

Total Cost of Other IPAT Services: \$7,463.<sup>06</sup>

*Other services included: product development; review of all applications; management of service process; coordinate/research purchases of equipment; budget management; and costs related to project administration.*

The average cost per participant for AT devices and services was lower than projected; consequently, funds were available to meet the assistive technology device and service needs of 5 additional people.

Average cost for nursing home care in North Dakota is \$43,815 per year and the average cost for assisted living care in North Dakota is \$19,726 per year. The average cost of the AT devices and services for an individual participating in this project is \$1,233.41.



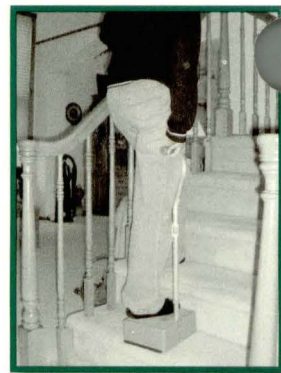


## Comments from other Participants:

- Purchased: EZ Step, jar opener, and bathtub rail
- Total cost of AT services and devices: \$570<sup>83</sup>
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**

*"... I thought I needed a contractor to redo my shower and laundry room space because of the step, now I found out I can use an EZ Step instead for less than \$100 – this is great, and my kids will be so much less worried about me falling." "... it is nice to know my options, but for now I will just go with the tub-rail and bath bench – if I ever need the hydraulic bath lift, I know where to go."*

Participant – Mandan, North Dakota



- Purchased: Swivel seat and emergency phone dialer
- Total cost of AT services and devices: \$1,111<sup>60</sup>
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**

*"... figuring out what my wife needed was really so simple, but I couldn't do it myself – I didn't know where to start ... it seemed so big."*

*"... now, having my wife wear the Emergency Dialer Telephone pendant gives me peace of mind, and allows me to drive into town to run needed errands when it works out for me rather than making it work with a friend or family member's schedule."*

Spouse – Wilton, North Dakota

- Purchased: Remote control deadbolt, Up-easy Chairlift, & an x-10 module
- Total cost of AT services and devices: \$708<sup>23</sup>
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**

*"... with my arthritis, using a key to unlock my door was difficult and painful, so many times I just left the door unlocked when I went out. When my kids found out I did that they were not happy! So, what I want to say is that for me and them, this remote control deadbolt is a godsend."*

Participant – Bismarck, North Dakota

- Purchased: Wireless keyboard and mouse, Palm ZIRE 72 with keyboard, 2 threshold ramps, and a wheelchair tray.
- Total cost of AT services and devices: \$2,215<sup>23</sup>
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**

*"...My husband and I would like to sincerely thank you and IPAT for the assistive devices he has received. Each and every one is truly an item that was so needed and we are so appreciative. We are most anxious to be able to use the threshold ramp so he can get in and out of the patio door to the back yard. With spring around the corner, it is such an uplifting thought for him to be able to make the transition from indoors to outdoors on his own. The wireless keyboard and mouse are so neat...no more wires getting caught in his feet under the desktop either."*

Participant – Fargo, North Dakota





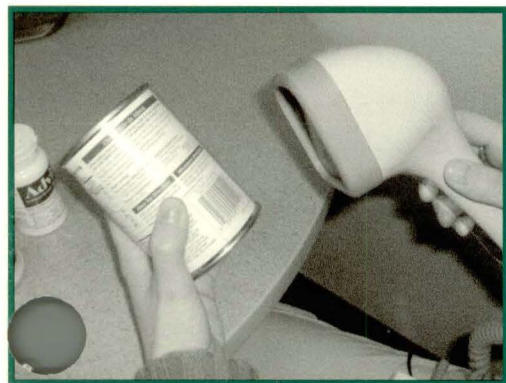


- Cost of AT device: \$1,358<sup>75</sup>
- Cost of AT service: \$694<sup>79</sup>
- Average cost of assisted living care: \$19,726/year
- Average cost of nursing facility care: \$43,815/year
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**

A retired rancher living with his wife took part in the project. He had lost the full use of his legs and arms due to a muscle-wasting disease, but could speak and had good head and breath control. His wife worked outside the home, leaving him alone for a good portion of the day. They both had concerns about how he could get help if something happened while she was at work, and his wife also wondered how he could turn on a light once it got dark. She forgot to leave a light on once when leaving for work and came home later that evening to find him sitting alone in the dark. To ease the concerns of both parties, a hands-free, infrared environmental control system, the Relax II, was purchased with project funds. This system, with the addition of a chin switch mounted to his wheelchair, allowed him to answer his phone, place a phone call, turn the TV on and off, change channels and adjust the volume, as well as, control the room lights independently.

*"... don't get me wrong, nursing homes are needed and are fine places for some people. I just want to stay home and do as much as I can for myself for as long as I can, keep my wife company and be part of my family. The technology you found for me lets me do that, thank you."*

Participant with quadriplegia – Bismarck, North Dakota



- Cost of AT device: \$1,624
- Cost of AT service: \$356<sup>25</sup>
- Average cost of assisted living care: \$19,726/year
- Average cost of nursing facility care: \$43,815/year
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**

A middle-aged woman who has been blind since birth and lives alone with her cats was referred to the project. There was assistance available to help her do her shopping (food, medicine, clothing) when out in the community, but when it came time to cook, take medication, do laundry, or get dressed, she was on her own. This led to frequent frustration and safety concerns when wrong choices were made. Without vision, she found it difficult to determine which pill bottle was blood pressure medicine, which soup can was tomato, or which laundry items needed to be washed in cold water. To help make living alone with blindness less frustrating and safer, the i.d. - mate II Bar Code Scanner was purchased for her with project dollars. This device reads the item label and other item specific information (contents, weight, dosage) aloud as she moves the infrared scanner over the product barcode. She can then distinguish between medicine bottles, food products, clothing care instructions, and other coded information independently.

*"... I take the i.d. mate II to the grocery store to identify the contents of canned goods, bottles, boxes, and bags before purchase. Once home, I can prepare meals independently and without waste by using the scanner to identify the container contents, and 'read' the directions for preparation on the package. No more opening a can of peaches when I wanted kidney beans for chili, or adding too much water to a rice dish and ending up with an icky rice soup."*

Participant with blindness – Minot, North Dakota



A married couple, who both use wheelchairs for mobility, were selected to be project participants. They were living in a house without a ramp, which rendered them prisoners in their own home – once inside, there was no safe way to get outside. A ramp was purchased for their home, making it possible for them to go in and out as they chose.

*"... thank you for all the work and assistance you gave us in getting a wheelchair ramp built. We feel so much more safe and independent since we have had it – we can even get out to empty our own garbage again."*

Participants with mobility issues – Williston, North Dakota

- Cost of AT device? \$1,204<sup>15</sup>
- Cost of AT service? \$658<sup>68</sup>
- Average cost of assisted living care: \$19,726/year
- Average cost of nursing facility care: \$43,815/year
- Having the choice to remain at home: **PRICELESS**



## *Related Assistive Technology Programs, Senior AT Safety Program and Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program*

At the same time that IPAT implemented the *No Place Like Home* project, they also administered the Senior Assistive Technology Safety Program (SATS) and the North Dakota Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP). Some of the participants of the *No Place Like Home* project were also in need of specialized telephone equipment, medication dispensers, and AT safety equipment. IPAT was able to coordinate and extend resources by accessing funding from SATS and TEDP to provide those devices. This freed up money to buy other equipment for the participants and allowed 5 additional people to participate in the *No Place Like Home* project.

It is worth noting that in addition to the 45 devices provided through the *No Place Like Home* project that 588 medication devices (32 different types) were distributed through the SATS program from 2003-2005. Many notes and comments were received by IPAT regarding the differences they made. A typical comment "... our biggest concern for our mother living alone was that she mixes up her medicines and forgets to take them or takes them at the wrong time. After getting the MedReady, she now takes her medicine like she is supposed to and I now feel much more comfortable with her staying in her own home."

The SATS program distributed a total of 5130 pieces of AT safety equipment to 3508 people living in their homes. The TEDP program distributed a total of 510 telephones and 61 telephone accessories to 537 North Dakota residents. Although these folks have not been followed like the *No Place Like Home* participants, it is a fact the AT devices are assisting them to live 'safely' and remain in their own homes. A note from a Milton resident, "Thank you for all of the items... It's a wonderful program and will help many of us to stay at home."

### *Outcomes*

The people served through the AT component of the *No Place Like Home* project had a number of services in place, but were still struggling to remain at home. The provision of AT devices and services had not been considered as part of their service plan prior to this project, and yet it was one of the decisive factors in making remaining home possible for them. The average cost of a participant to receive the assistive technology devices and services necessary to help them remain living at home was \$1,233. The average yearly cost for an individual to reside in a nursing home in North Dakota is \$43,815 and \$19,726 for assisted living care.

One year later, 17 of the 20 people are still in their own homes. They have delayed, and will possibly avoid, entering an institutional setting. They continue to live with their families, are more independent and safer as a result of the AT devices and services received through this project.

One individual moved away from North Dakota. She received services but no equipment, and her whereabouts are unknown.

Two of the individuals who participated in this project passed away approximately one year after receiving their AT devices and services. After their passing, IPAT received calls from family members stating what a huge difference the assistive technology made, especially in helping their family member to stay home the last months of their life. Recognizing the importance of AT, one family has donated the devices back to IPAT so someone else can benefit from their use.

### *Conclusion*

This project showed that when the assistive technology provision is part of the service delivery plan, it can delay institutional or other high-cost placements. This in turn, enables people of all ages with disabilities or long term illnesses to have a choice as to where they live, which everyone can agree is PRICELESS.

*"... We are still looked at as neighbors, husband and wife, parents and grandparents, rather than a woman alone with a husband living off in a separate facility as a member of the disabled community. Making changes to our living space and using assistive technology was more cost-effective for us and it allows us to be together. We stay active together. The quality of our lives is so much richer."*

Spouse of a *No Place Like Home* Committee Member  
Bismarck, North Dakota



Funded by the North Dakota Department of Human Services and  
the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT)  
September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2005

Submitted by:  
Judie Lee, Program Director  
1-800-265-4728

4-6

15.0784.01001  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for  
Senator Kilzer

February 18, 2015

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2289

Page 1, line 5, replace "\$500,000" with "\$160,000"

Renumber accordingly

# 1  
2-18-15  
SB 2289

/





#1  
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Judie Lee, CEO • jlee@ndipat.org • 800.895.4728 • ndipat.org  
Interagency Program for Assistive Technology • 3240 15<sup>th</sup> St. S, Suite B • Fargo, ND 58104

**Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 2289 – Related to Assistive Technology Services**  
**House Human Services Committee**  
**Representative Weisz, Chairman**  
**March 9, 2015**

Chairman Weisz, and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Judie Lee, Chief Executive Officer for the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology, or IPAT. I am here today to ask you to support IPAT's additional funding request of \$160,000 for the purpose of maintaining assistive technology services for the elderly and people with disabilities. The additional funding will be used to offset the 12% decrease in IPAT's overall funding. This request was amended in the Senate Appropriations Committee from \$500,000. The additional \$340,000 request was to fund the expansion of AT service infrastructure to meet the needs of people who live in the Western portion of the state. This is the first appropriation request IPAT has made in 8 years.

To clarify for the Committee, IPAT did not ask to meet with the Governor's Office to discuss including this request into the budget, nor was it an Optional Adjustment Request.

1

IPAT was established in 1993 and has been designated by the Governor as the implementing entity to carry out the statewide comprehensive assistive technology (AT) program in North Dakota as outlined in the federal AT Act.

Located within state government until 2005, IPAT is now a nonprofit organization that serves people of all ages and disabilities statewide.

IPAT operates with a combination of federal AT Act funds and state general fund appropriations. In 2007, the ND Legislature appropriated funds for IPAT to build a statewide AT infrastructure capable of providing a continuum of AT services.

This made it possible for State Agencies and other entities to contract with IPAT to provide a variety of AT services for North Dakotans in a very cost effective and efficient manner. The Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program and the Adult Safety Device Distribution Service are 2 such programs contracted through Aging Services. At the federal level, IPAT contracts with the FCC to provide telecommunication devices to people who have both hearing and vision losses. We also contract with Sprint to provide outreach information for the state's telecommunications Relay program.

IPAT provides services through offices located in Fargo and Bismarck. The continuum of AT services provided by knowledgeable and experienced AT Consultants includes: provision of AT information, device demonstration, device rental, training, device re-use program, financial loan program, and direct service to individuals. Additionally, IPAT serves organizations, agencies, and providers

with awareness programs and products, technical assistance, training, and collaboration to fulfill our related missions.

IPAT impacts hundreds of people across the state every year who want to remain safely at home, participate more fully at school, and remain or return to work. The most dramatic financial impact involves people who have avoided, or delayed a move to the nursing home once AT has been provided. Emergency alert systems, basic safety devices, special telephones, and devices for independence keep people at home, and for a cost that is trivial compared to long term care, or assisted living.

In your packet is an extensive list of short anecdotes from consumers in all fifty-three North Dakota counties and a chart of organizations served by IPAT. The IPAT Biennial Report contains comprehensive data on the many IPAT programs showing the statewide impact. A return on investment study conducted by IPAT in 2003 (*Remaining at Home...Priceless*) is also included in your packet. This study remains relevant today as costs of care have nearly doubled, our population has aged significantly, while assistive technology has advanced and become cheaper.

The need and demand for AT services continues to increase as people and our service system better understand how AT can support individual goals and



agency missions. In addition to helping people stay at home, we see other trends as well:

- Younger seniors want to know more about AT options to maintain independence as they age.
- State initiatives, such as the Autism Waiver, identify AT as an essential service.
- Programs such as Older Blind, are asking for IPAT's high level expertise to deliver increasingly complex AT devices.
- And all of IPAT's services to people, agencies and providers are in greater demand, especially in Western North Dakota.

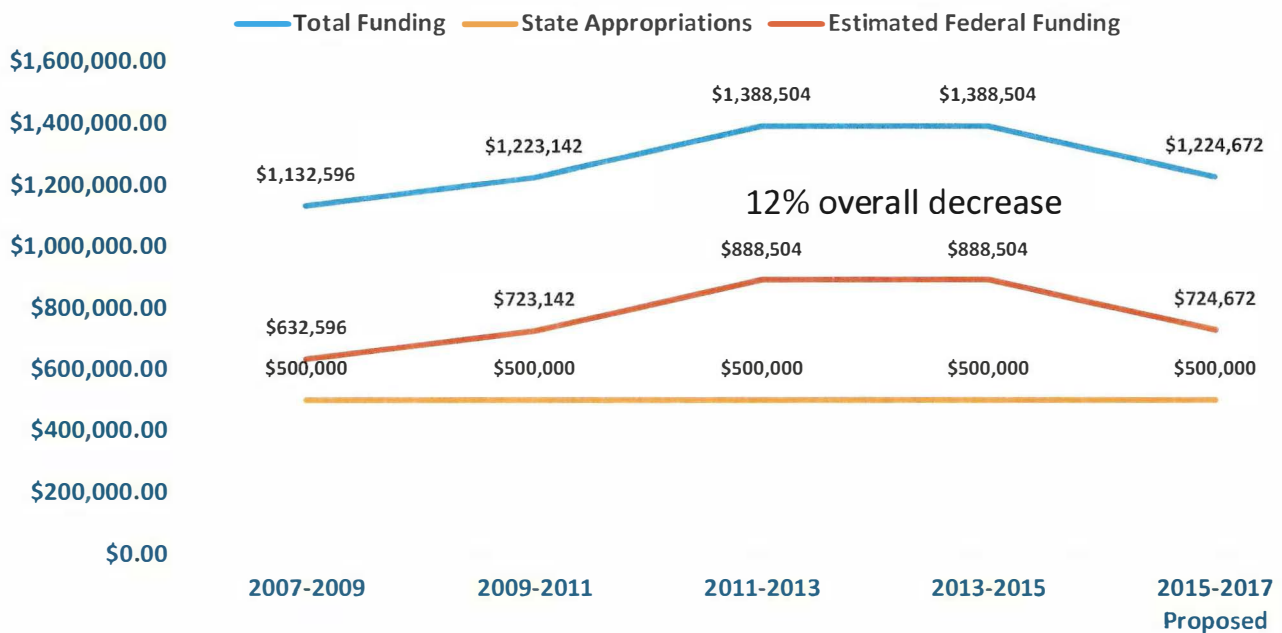
For an overview of IPAT's current and proposed funding, I will refer the Committee to Table 1. Note the \$164,000 decrease in federal dollars.

*Table 1*

2013-2015 Current		2015-2017 DHS Proposed		Decrease
Federal	\$888,540	Federal	\$724,672	(\$163,868)
State	\$500,000	State	\$500,000	0
Total	\$1,388,540	Total	\$1,224,672	(\$163,868)

For an overview of IPAT's funding history from 2007 to date, I will refer the Committee to Graph 1.

**Graph 1\_Funding History**

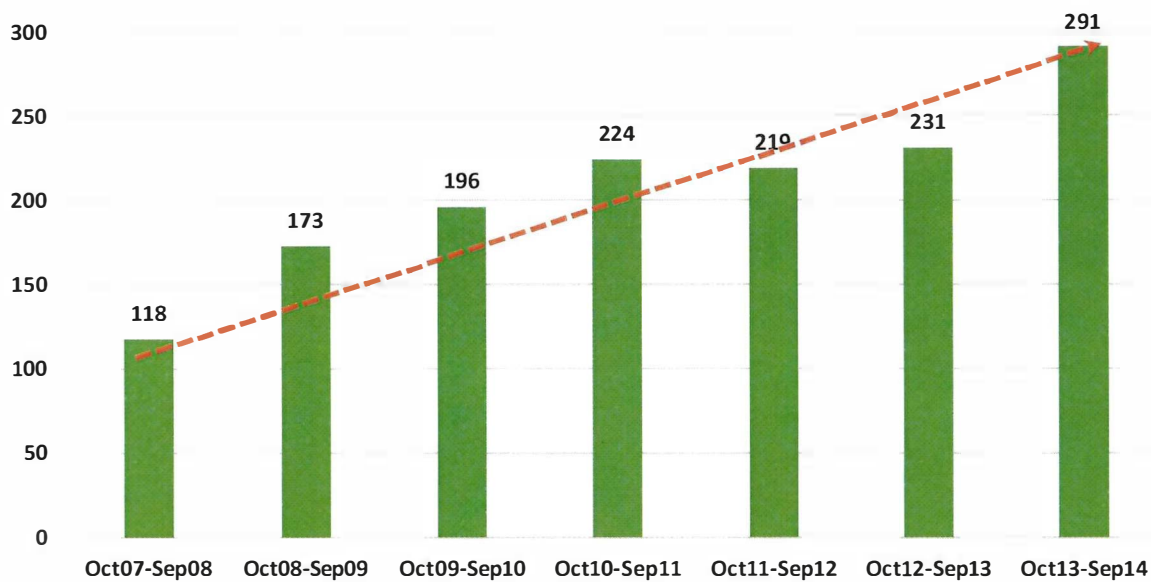


The \$164,000 decrease is a 12 percent reduction in IPAT's overall funding level for the 2015-2017 biennium. This decrease would trigger a reduction in expenditures that finance our infrastructure and is essential to supporting the AT needs of people statewide. Expenses such as demonstration space, travel to conduct awareness, training, and technical assistance, and the personnel to carry out these activities will be affected. IPAT's capacity to support the contracting needs of other agencies would be impacted as well.

The \$160,000 appropriation passed by the Senate holds even IPAT's capacity to continue serving people going forward into the next biennium.

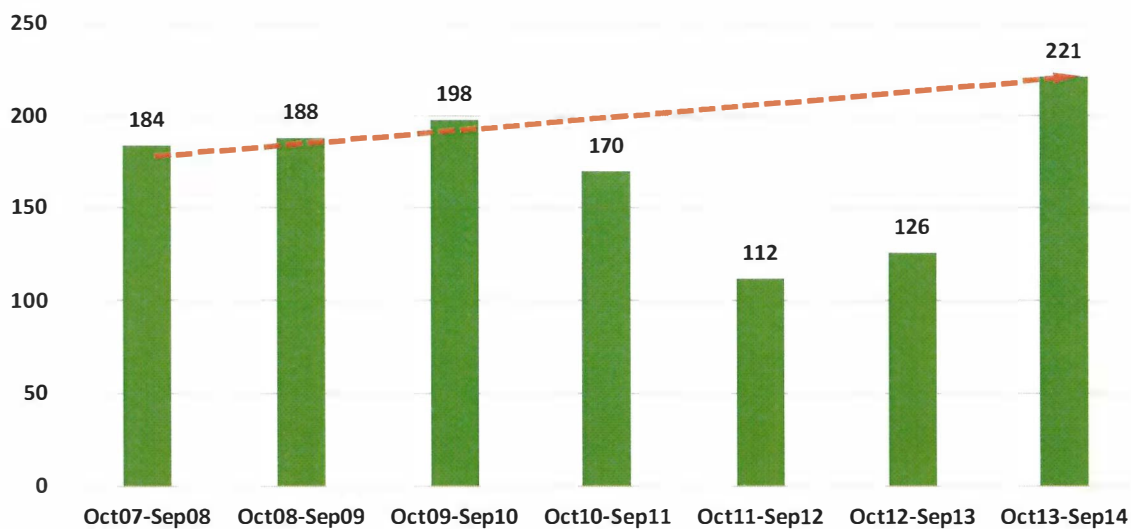
To illustrate how IPAT has used state resources appropriated in 2007 to deliver a continuum of AT services, we offer the following Graphs 2-5.

**Graph 2\_Device Demonstration**



Demonstrations place AT directly into the hands of consumers to help them make the right decision on the right device, or no device at all.

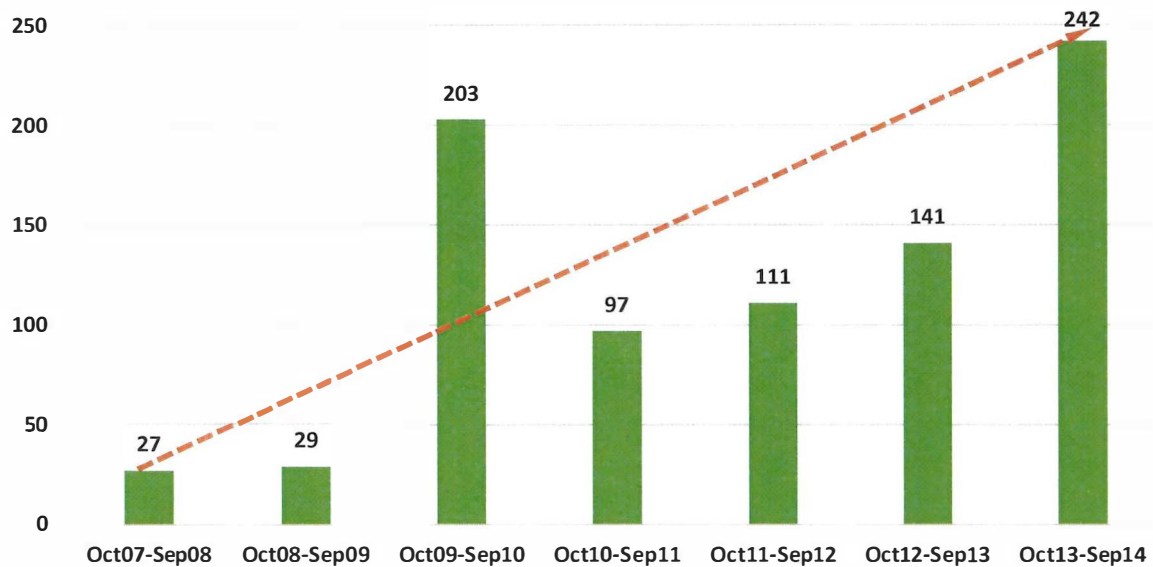
**Graph 3\_Equipment Rental**





Equipment rentals provide a low cost way for consumers to try devices for a 6 week trial. This ensures that a good decision is made to purchase, or not to purchase, a particular device.

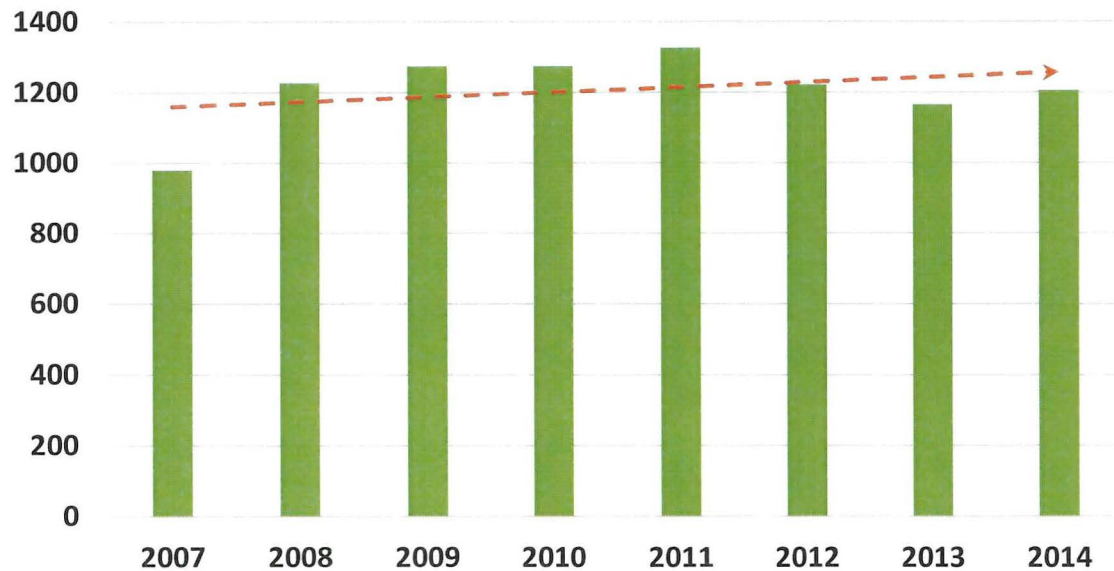
**Graph 4\_Device Exchange**



Device Exchange programs save thousands of dollars annually by connecting consumers who own devices no longer in use. IPAT has provided the means for people to make these connections.

There are also a significant number of people who contact IPAT every year via phone, email, or in person for direct assistance to address their AT concerns as depicted in Graph 5.

**Graph 5\_People Contact IPAT for Assistance**



These positive trend lines show that demand for AT services has increased. At the same time, IPAT has responded to the demand within the boundaries of level funding for the past 8 years. We believe that a 12 percent decrease in funding will flatten or reverse these trend lines going forward.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Judie Lee  
IPAT CEO  
701-365-4728  
[jlee@ndipat.org](mailto:jlee@ndipat.org)  
[www.ndipat.org](http://www.ndipat.org)



Making anything possible with Assistive Technology

*part of #1*

## HELPING NORTH DAKOTANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN ENGAGE IN LIFE

### County      With IPAT's assistance . . . . .

- Adams      an 86 year old woman with congestive heart failure and macular degeneration can now safely go down her basement to do her laundry using a stair lift.
- Barnes      a senior with severe vision loss was able to determine if an iPad with magnification apps worked for her before she spent the dollars by renting this equipment from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library. She discovered that she was able to read and see objects in her environment with this more cost effective equipment versus spending thousands on a traditional video magnifier.
- Benson      a student with a Traumatic Brain Injury, who was referred by her vocational rehabilitation counselor, found solutions to help her succeed in college and life. She discovered apps to help her with memory loss, reading, writing, and taking notes for the smartphone she already owned, as well as, other solutions.
- Billings      a senior with physical disabilities is now able to safely transport items around his home on a walker tray, enabling him to be more independent.
- Bottineau      a 63 year old woman with MS can now operate her computer independently with training she received on Dragon Naturally Speaking, speech recognition software.
- Bowman      a 92 year old POW is now able to live independently again with devices that help him to dress himself, get up from chairs, and alert others when there is an emergency.
- Burke      a 71 year old woman with right side paralysis is now able to continue living independently at home using a manual wheelchair.
- Burleigh      a preschooler with Autism is now communicating with family and peers and developing his language skills after using the IPAT Equipment Rental Program to try various communication devices to help determine purchase.
- Cass      a 60 year old man with workplace injuries discovered solutions for reading and writing at the Fargo IPAT Center. After an equipment trial through IPAT's Rental program and purchase by ND Workforce Safety and Insurance, the man was able to obtain his GED and pursue new employment.
- Cavalier      a new high school graduate with a learning disability was referred by vocational rehabilitation for a consultation to help her find solutions to help her succeed in college and her chosen career. She left the consultation with solutions for reading, writing, spelling, and note taking.



**County****With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

Wickey	a 23 year old woman with Down Syndrome and a speech impairment is now able to communicate with others, help cook meals, take her medications, and remember daily chores and events with an iPad and various apps.
Divide	a senior with a physical disability is now able to ambulate in her own home and remain there safely using a walker she obtained through IPAT's senior safety program. Without this device, she would not have the means to remain in her own home and would be at a high risk for falls and institutionalization.
Dunn	an individual who is deaf is now alerted when his smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector alarm goes off with the use of an adapted flashing alarm system.
Eddy	a college student with a learning disability learned about solutions for reading, writing, spelling, note taking, math, and memory loss at the IPAT Center. After recommendations from IPAT and equipment purchase by ND Vocational Rehabilitation, she is now succeeding in school and pursuing her chosen career.
Emmons	a 46 year old woman with MS and unable to move below the neck is now able to independently control her TV, fan, DVD, and lights with a speech activated remote control, thereby removing the need to call on staff to help her.
Foster	a senior is now able to take her medication regularly through the use of a medication dispenser specific to her needs, allowing her to stay living at home.
Golden Valley	a woman with severe physical disabilities is now able to feed herself with the use of adapted dinnerware and a specialized cuff to help her hold the utensils in her hand, reducing the need for paid staff to help her.
Grand Forks	a 60 year old architect with a sudden severe hearing loss discovered an iPad app that allows him to understand a person's speech almost instantaneously due to speech recognition. With recommendations from IPAT, he purchased the equipment and is now communicating with his coworkers and colleagues again.
Grant	a 76 year old man with memory loss is now able live at home independently using solutions to help with medication to ensure he is taking his medications as ordered by his doctor.
Griggs	a child with a developmental disability rented several communication devices from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library which helped his parents, speech pathologist, and the school, determine which device would be appropriate for his communication needs.
Hettinger	a senior is now able to read independently with the use of a tray table for her wheelchair.
Widder	a senior is now able to call 911 for help with the push of a button on a portable alerting device with no added monthly fee, allowing her to live safely at home even if the phone is not nearby.

**County**

**With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

- LaMoure an 84 year old woman with physical disabilities discovered solutions to help her get in and out of the bathtub safely. After the equipment purchase, she can now bathe independently, which allows her to stay in her own home.
- Logan a 57 year old woman with severe physical disabilities is now able to get up on her own with the aid of a lift chair.
- McHenry a 3 year old boy with a speech disorder is now able to communicate his wants and needs with his family, teachers and peers in all environments with an iPad and a communication app.
- McIntosh a man with a severe hearing impairment and dementia is now able to get in/out of his bed by himself and safely bathe, allowing him to stay in his home with his wife.
- McKenzie a young student with multiple disabilities was able to stay at home with her parents after an IPAT consultation that led to recommendations for home modifications in the bathroom and bedroom.
- McLean a senior with vision loss was able to try cheaper alternatives to expensive video magnifiers through the IPAT Equipment Rental program. This provided valuable information and cost savings when it came time for purchase.
- Mercer a senior who lost the ability to use one of his arms due to a stroke is now able to open cans and prepare his own meals without assistance. He is very proud to be able to live independently again!
- Morton a 61 year old man who is legally blind is now able to read his medication bottles, mail, newspapers, and food labels with a portable reader and magnifier.
- Mountrail a 48 year old woman with a severe speech and physical disability can now communicate effectively using an iPad communication app.
- Nelson a 95 year old woman with a hearing loss is now able to hear her family and friends with a new hearing device.
- Oliver a 70 year old man is now able to access his own home and bathe independently using a cane and bath chair.
- Pembina a 58 year old woman who is legally blind is now able to read any text with a specialized device that speaks the printed word aloud. This enables her to read most anything in her environment independently such as her medication bottles, bills, and mail.
- Pierce a young man with a traumatic brain injury is now able to compensate for his severe memory loss with the aid of a smartphone and memory apps, which allows him to be safer and more independent, giving his family members piece of mind.

**County      With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

Ramsey	an older than average college student with Rheumatoid Arthritis, vision and hearing loss, was able to be successful in college with solutions for computer access and reading/writing she received during an IPAT consultation.
Ransom	a young woman with progressive speech and physical disabilities due to ALS received consultation, equipment trials, and recommendations for devices to help her access the computer and communication with family and friends.
Renville	a 71 year old woman with a traumatic brain injury can now bathe herself independently with equipment that allows her to safely enter and exit her bath tub.
Richland	a 53 year old woman is now traveling independently to new places without fear due to a handheld talking GPS device.
Rolette	a 63 year old woman with a visual impairment is now able to conduct her own business through a used computer she obtained through IPAT's used equipment online resource, AT4All, which allows anyone from North Dakota to list their used equipment.
Sargent	a man with ALS was able to rent a voice amplifier from the IPAT equipment rental program to aid him in communicating with family, friends and doctors the last months of his life.
Sheridan	a 48 year old woman with expressive language disabilities and minimal speech, is now able to type, write, or draw her ideas using an iPad with various communication apps.
Sioux	a young man with a reading disability was able to try equipment from the IPAT Equipment Rental Program such as a Reading Pen that allows him to scan a word and have it read aloud. These rentals helped determine a more successful purchase.
Slope	a young student with a vision loss was able to have access to his school curriculum with devices such as scan-and-read software to read his worksheets aloud.
Stark	a 50 year old woman with MS is now able to remain driving and keep her independence with hand controls for her vehicle.
Steele	a senior who was unable to climb stairs due to a temporary injury rented the EZ-step cane from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library, which enabled him to climb stairs throughout his recovery time without pain.
Stutsman	a 46 year old woman with children at home who is deaf is now notified with a specialized device that flashes lights and provides vibration when doorbells sound, phones ring, or smoke alarms blast.



**County****With IPAT's assistance . . . . .**

- owner a woman who has deafness and blindness is now able to communicate by connecting long distance with family and friends through use of a computer, big screen monitor, large keyboard, and Skype, which allows her to lip read from far away.
- Traill a middle school student with Autism can now take notes in class independently with solutions he and his parents learned about after a visit to the IPAT Demonstration Center.
- Walsh a man with MS is now able to continue his love of teaching with solutions such as speech recognition software and specialized keyboards that he learned about during an IPAT consultation.
- Ward siblings ages 1, 3, and 5 with hearing impairments are now able to communicate and access information with a family FM system.
- Wells a 24 year old man with COPD is now able to mobilize independently in his home with the aid of a stair lift. This allows him to access the bus without help and lessens the safety risks for himself and his caregivers.
- Williams a 56 year old woman who is legally blind is now much more independent with a portable barcode reader that allows her to scan and have spoken aloud the name of groceries, medicines or other household products with UPC codes. This device has eliminated product confusion and increased safety.

## Organizations Served by IPAT

Agency Type/Organization Name	Services Provided
<b>Agencies that serve children, the aging, and people with disabilities</b>	
Adaptive Equipment Services	consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Autism Spectrum Disorder Statewide Taskforce	participated in planning meetings for voucher and waiver programs to identify health registry information, diagnostic criteria and services
Burleigh County Senior Adults Program	presentation
Community Elder Service Network	committee member
Council on Exceptional Children	presentation
Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health	presentation
Early Childhood Intervention Committee	committee member, presentation
Governor's Forum on Aging	presentation
Life Skills & Transition Center	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding; presentation
Money Follows the Person	equipment rental; Served on this task force for 7 years to highlight and inform membership of the importance of considering AT before community placement
North Dakota State Council on Developmental Disabilities	presentations/demonstrations
North Dakota School for the Blind	training/coordination and collaboration
North Dakota School for the Deaf	training/coordination and collaboration
North Dakota Vision Services	technical assistance
North Dakota Voting System Replacement Committee	committee participant
Older Blind Program	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Ombudsman Program	information/resource
Options Counseling	information/resource
Relay North Dakota	contracted to provide outreach services
Regional Aging Service Providers	information/resource
Statewide Aging Collaborative	committee member, information/resource
Statewide Coalition on Aging	participated as a member of this statewide group to move forward in addressing current needs of the elderly and identify future needs; aim is to pool resources and keep services unduplicated and easily accessed
Vocational Rehabilitation	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding

14

## Organizations Served by IPAT

Agencies that serve children, the aging, and people with disabilities, continued		
	West Central Vulnerable Adults Coalition	presentation
Healthcare Funding		
	Traditional Medicaid Waiver Workgroup	workgroup member
Healthcare and Rehabilitation Providers		
15	Altru Home and Health Services	information/resource
	Altru Rehabilitation Departments	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Audiologists throughout the state	equipment, displays, information/resource
	Beyond Boundaries Therapy	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Edgewood Vista	participate in annual health-fair; provided 4 part training to residents in assisted living on how to use their iPad to increase independent living options
	Elim Nursing Home	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Essentia Health	information/resource
	Essentia Health Rehabilitation Departments	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Essentia Home Health	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Jamestown Regional Medical Center	technical assistance
	Long Term Care Association of North Dakota	consultation regarding the use of AT in long term care settings
	MidDakota Clinic	information/resource
	Napoleon Care Center	equipment rental, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	North Dakota Brain Injury Association	information/resource
	Onward Therapy	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Parish Nurses	provide updates annually on assistive devices that can help the elderly stay at home/ consultation
	Peaceful Pioneer Haven Residential Community	presentation
	Pediatric Therapy Partners	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding



## Organizations Served by IPAT

### Healthcare and Rehabilitation Providers, continued

16	Prairie Harvest Mental Health	consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Progressive Therapy Associates	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Prorehab	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Public Health units throughout the state	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Quentin Burdick Health Center	information/resource
	Sanford Health	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Sanford Healthcare Accessories	information/resource
	Sanford Health Rehabilitation Departments	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Sheyenne Crossings	presentation
	St. Alexius Medical Center	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Tribal Cancer Care Forum	presentation
	Valley Memorial Homes	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Veteran's Hospital	information/resource
	Vibra Hospital	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Villa Maria Nursing Home	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding

### Employment Agencies

	Community Options, Inc.	technical assistance, training
	Experience Works	technical assistance, training
	North Dakota Job Service	technical assistance for purchase, client consultations
	Vocational Training Center	coordination and collaboration/training/demonstrations/assessment
	Veteran's Administration Vocational Rehabilitation	provide consultations

## Organizations Served by IPAT

State Agencies		
17	Aging Services	contractor for telecommunications and senior safety programs
	Attorney General's Office	provide expert testimony in legal cases
	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services	respond to proposed changes to Medicaid amendments specific to AT, resulted in alteration of initial amendment offered
	Department of Health	visit in regard to scope, make-up, and purpose of diagnostic teams for children with autism
	Department of Human Services	member II/DD Medicaid HCBS waiver amendments workgroup
	Department of Information Technology	provided technical assistance with web accessibility, telecommunications
	Department of Public Education	assisted with the drafting of guidelines to AT in education, responded to requests to provide training to educators and staff on AT for various populations (children with autism, communication disorders, learning disabilities)
	Department of Public Instruction	Consumer Advisory Council member, technical assistance
	Department of Transportation	technical assistance
	Division of Developmental Disabilities	participate in meetings regarding ID/DD HSBS waiver
	Dual Sensory Project	partner in NDBEDP (deaf-blind telecommunication)
	Home and Community-Based Services	responded to waivers & AT program contributions, service, involvement, and coverage of service
	Emergency Management	5 years on the Special Needs Registry task force to develop the volunteer registry of those at risk during an emergency; collaborated to identify IPAT as an AT resource for temporary shelters
	Secretary of State	technical assistance with accessible voting
	Protection and Advocacy	consultation on assistive technology possibilities when they are working with due process for education and vocational rehabilitation/collaborate on issues relating to people accessing AT
	Vocational Rehabilitation	lead agency resource for federal funding; provide assessments/demonstrations to VR clients/ training
	Workforce Safety and Insurance	assessments/demonstrations
Schools and Universities		
	Bismarck Early Childhood Education Program	presentation
	Fort Berthold Community College	presentation/training
	Mayville State University	presentation/training
	North Dakota State College of Science	pre-service training for Occupational Therapy Assistant students



## Organizations Served by IPAT

Schools and Universities, continued		
	North Dakota State University	collaborated with electrical engineering department to create Home First Showroom App; technical assistance to student projects; equipment rentals and demonstrations
	North Dakota Transition Community of Practice	committee member
	Northwest Technical College	presentation
	Public schools throughout the state	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Sitting Bull College	technical assistance to counselor
	Standing Rock Community School	presentation
	University of Mary	pre-service training for Physical and Occupational Therapy students
	University of North Dakota	pre-service training for Physical and Occupational Therapy students
	United Tribes Technical College	twice yearly present to staff and students on IPAT and assistive technology
County Social Services		
	Statewide	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Disability Service Organizations		
	Alzheimer's Association of Minnesota-North Dakota	presentations/demonstrations/ consultations
	Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired	presentation
	Autism Society of North Dakota	demonstration
	Cystic Fibrosis Association of North Dakota	presentations/demonstrations
	Muscular Dystrophy Association	information/resource
	North Dakota Association for the Blind	presentations/coordination and collaboration
	North Dakota Multiple Sclerosis Society	presentations/demonstrations
	North Dakota National Federation of the Blind Annual Conference	presentation
	Northern Plains Conference on Aging and Disability	presentation
	Pathfinders	exhibit and present on AT at their annual conference for parents; training
	Turtle Mountain Disabilities Conference	presentation
Support groups		
	ALS Support Group	training on AT solutions for ALS
	Hearing Support Group	presentation; information/ resource
	Parkinson's Support Group	training on AT resources for those who have Parkinson's Disease

18



## Organizations Served by IPAT

<b>Support groups, continued</b>		
	Vision Support Group	information/ resource
<b>Community organizations</b>		
	Community of Care	Home First tour/ demonstrations
	Elder Care Services	set-up a long-term display of AT for the elderly in the community center; work closely with the elder care providers
	Faith Lutheran Church, Fargo	presentation
	Family Voices	provide topical call training per request on assistive technology
	First Link	board member
	Kiwanis	presentation
	Metro Area Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities	information/resource
	Pediatric Quorum - Sanford Health Services	8 years of service to advocate for AT inclusion in health services for children
	Project HERO	collaborate on information and resources
	Rebuilding Together of Greater Bismarck/ Mandan	10 years on board, actively involved in rehabilitating over 60 homes for low income, elderly in need of AT to stay home safely
	Senior Centers throughout the state	information/ resource/ demonstrations
	Senior Connections	presentation
	United Way	4 years of monthly meetings to share community resources for those that are elderly, of low income or have disabilities - pool resources and collaborate
<b>Housing agencies</b>		
	Fargo Housing Authority	information/resource
	Housing Alliance of North Dakota	served on this alliance for 7 years, helped move the legislative action forward to create the Housing Initiative Fund
	NDHFA Housing Incentive Fund	field calls from HIF seekers specific to how to go about building for accessibility
	North Dakota Housing Finance Agency	presentation/ information/ resource
<b>Private providers of services for people with developmental disabilities</b>		
	Able, Inc.-Dickinson	information/resource
	Anne Carlsen Center for Children-Jamestown	information/resource
	The Arc	information/resource
	Community Living Services	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Easter Seals-Mandan	equipment rental, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase

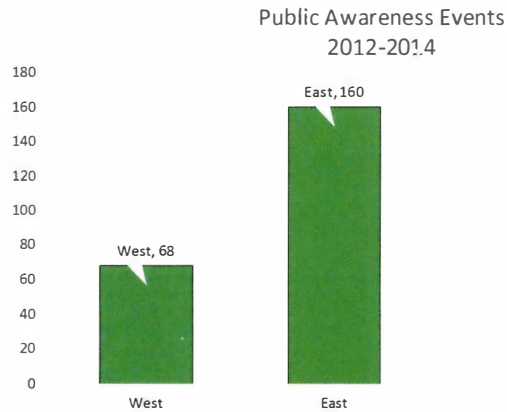
19

## Organizations Served by IPAT

Private providers of services for people with developmental disabilities, continued		
	Friendship, Inc.-Fargo/Grafton	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	HAV-IT Services-Harvey	equipment rental, training, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
	Open Door Center-Valley City	information/ resource
	HIT, Inc.-Mandan	equipment rental, training, consultations, information and assistance for equipment purchase, equipment troubleshooting, and funding
Independent Living		
	Dakota Center for Independent Living	training, technical assistance, collaboration
	Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living	training, technical assistance, collaboration
	Independence Independent Living Center	training, technical assistance, collaboration
	Options Independent Living Center	training, technical assistance, collaboration
Other Organizations and Projects		
	Alliance Realty	information/resource on accessible housing
	ATAP (Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs)	member/ training / presentation
	DakotaLink (South Dakota AT program)	information/resource
	Fort Berthold Reservation	information/resource
	HAVA (Help America Vote Act) Project	technical assistance to county auditors
	KXMB Noon Show, Bismarck	noon spots to highlight and market various aspects/equipment of IPAT
	Pediatric Acquired Brain Injury Committee	committee member
	Sons of Norway	presentation
	Spirit Lake Tribe	information/resource
	Standing Rock Reservation	information/resource
	Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians	presentations
	WDAY media	Home First Showroom promotion



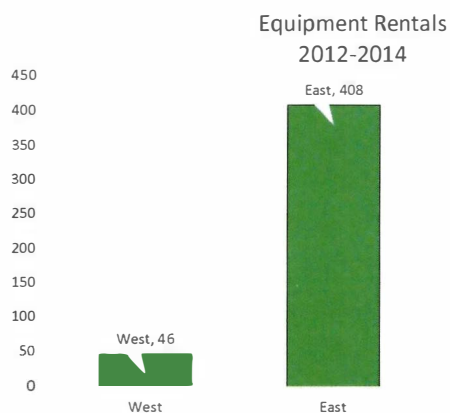
## AT Access\_East v. West Awareness Matters



Access to AT tracks directly with IPAT's direct outreach awareness activities.



## AT Access\_East v. West Awareness Matters

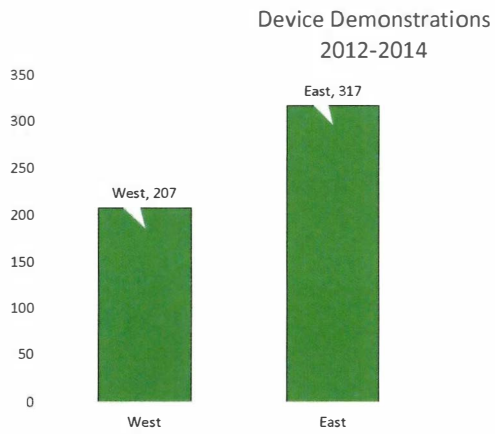


Note that the number of device rentals tracks closely to the amount of direct contact with IPAT staff.





## AT Access\_East v. West Awareness Matters



Note that the number of device demonstrations tracks closely to the amount of direct contact with IPAT staff.

House Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
March 9, 2015

Chairman Weisz, members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Bob Puyear. I am a retired professor of zoology at NDSU and currently serve on IPAT's Board of Directors, and on IPAT's Consumer Advisory Council. More importantly, I am a husband, living at home with my wife Shirley. Due to her foresight, and the help of assistive technology devices I am able to remain in my home, and that is why I am here today to ask for your support of Senate Bill 2289.

I would like to see other North Dakotans experiencing the effects of aging as well as those of us with disabilities remain at home with assistive technology. IPAT knows how to help people do that through their Home First Showroom. I would like to allot my remaining testimony time to Peggy Shireley from IPAT to take the committee on a virtual tour of the Home First Showroom.

Robert Puyear  
305 Remington Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-224-8474

House Human Services Committee  
SB 2289  
March 9, 2015

Thank you Bob. Chairman Weisz and members of the Committee, my name is Peggy Shireley, and I am a Senior AT Consultant in IPAT's Bismarck Technology Access Center. I am going to take a few minutes to introduce you to two of the unique ways IPAT delivers statewide services to families like Bob's. These families are increasing in number, and they too, wish to have a family member whose abilities are changing remain or return home, but have no idea of how to make that happen.

One of the ways IPAT helps those families begin to envision remaining together at home is through our Home First Showroom in Fargo. It is an actual home environment outfitted with assistive technology (AT) devices to help people complete everyday tasks. Visitors to the Showroom can try out different ways to maintain independence using assistive technology in the kitchen, living room, dining room, bathroom, den and bedroom. We welcome all interested parties to explore the Showroom, and have discovered it is where many "aha" moments occur for families. They arrive unsure of options, and often leave inspired with a place to start. But what about those North Dakotans that cannot make it to Fargo? IPAT needed a way to replicate the Showroom experience.

We did that by creating the Home First Showroom app, which allows anyone to virtually visit our Showroom to see how AT may help someone they love stay or come back home. If you would draw your attention to the media screens. You are looking at the

home page of our Home First virtual tour app. It consists of 11 interactive windows which are snapshots of the six different rooms found in our Fargo showroom. When a window is tapped, it will enlarge and you will see our Home First house icons which are placed on various assistive technology devices within the room. When you tap an icon, a video will begin that explains what the device is, and how it is used.

Let's head to Living Room Area 3 – Tyler will activate the lamp icon. I am sure you have all seen the clapper advertised, but never thought of it as AT. But it can be – and was for my 91 year-old mother, who clapped the lamp next to her bed on and off to make her multiple trips to the bathroom each night. This simple device kept her in her home and safe until the end. This \$20 piece of AT helped avoid a more restrictive placement.

Let's check out Bathroom Area 2 – Tyler will activate the battery operated bath-lift chair icon. This is a more obvious piece of AT, and is a device that IPAT recommended after an in-home assessment for a family in Watford City. The family wants to keep their 19 year old daughter with mobility impairments and intellectual disabilities at home, but can no longer lift her in and out of a bathtub safely. This \$1,055 piece of AT will eliminate an ICF/MR placement.

IPAT continues to be the statewide resource responsible for providing a continuum of AT services; one of which is to help people of all ages and abilities remain at home safely with assistive technology. We use our Showroom and virtual tour to help families see the possibilities AT offers within the context of their home. These two resources help start a conversation between aging parents and their adult children; help families



visualize solutions for those who are returning home changed after an accident or military service; and they help families discover ways they can continue to care for their children with disabilities as both parents and children age.

I hope you will visit the Home First Showroom when you travel to Fargo, and go to the Apple Store to download our free IPAT app to see assistive technology in action. It truly has the power to affordably change lives of North Dakotans who are aging or have disabilities. Thank you.

Peggy S. Shireley  
IPAT Senior AT Consultant  
701-355-4615



#4

House Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
March 9, 2015

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Denise Arntson. I work for American Bank Center. I have also been involved with the non-profit organization Rebuilding Together Greater Bismarck Mandan since 1997. I am here today to ask you to support SB 2289 to provide assistive technology services for the elderly and people with disabilities provided by IPAT.

It has been my privilege to serve in various capacities with Rebuilding Together (RT), whose goal is to keep low income homeowners at home safely. Peggy Shireley, Senior AT Consultant for IPAT has been a partner in this work.

When we visit with homeowners about their needs, their responses generally start with something like: I no longer use the shower because I can't step into the bathtub; or I don't lock my doors because it is too painful with my arthritis. We look to IPAT to work with these homeowners, and they find solutions. It may be an over the tub safety rail, or something more "high-tech" such as remote control door locks. IPAT consistently provides information and tools to help people remain independent. The work IPAT has done with over 40 homeowners in the RT projects has helped these people remain safely in their homes - - - for years. Nursing home care can cost up to \$7000 a month creating great financial strains. With IPAT's outreach we have delayed and decreased the need for government assistance for these low income citizens while they stay in their homes longer and spend less time in nursing home facilities.

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On a more personal level, my great-aunt Alice, was a courageous survivor who walked with a leg brace and cane following a stroke at age 50. Nearing 90, she considered moving out of her home. In assessing options, the facility with self-closing apartment doors was immediately eliminated. Alice moved slowly and that self-closing door could knock her right over. I visited with Peggy and learned about electric door openers specifically made and installed for homes and apartment doors. Who knew!!! This technology could literally open doors and options for Alice.

IPAT provides options. The assistance that IPAT offers allows people to remain safe as they navigate through life; it allows them to continue to take an active role in their personal care and to maintain that can-do attitude so prevalent in North Dakota.

IPAT is a source of information and equipment - - - but mostly it is a source of hope and dignity. None of us likes to be a burden on others. What a gift IPAT gives to our North Dakota friends and family.

I would like to ask each of you for your support for SB 2289 and I thank you for your time.

Denise Arntson  
1223 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-400-0135

45  
House Human Services Committee  
Senate Bill 2289  
March 9, 2015

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Eugenie Lang and I am a retired registered nurse. I am here to ask you to support SB 2289.

Please let me tell you what IPAT has done for me. In 2009 I was diagnosed with a pituitary tumor. The pituitary gland is located at the base of the brain and next to several very important structures. My tumor grew so fast that my optic nerves sustained permanent damage, leaving me legally blind. The tumor was removed, but its impact to my life has continued on and on. Having never needed services before, I did not know what was available to help me. IPAT showed me assistive technology so I could continue to read for pleasure, to determine the time, to read medication labels, to read food labels and so many more things. IPAT has allowed me remain in and to feel safe in my own home.

The most important assistive technology I learned about was a voting machine. I helped test this new product, which I could use without any other assistance. This machine helped me to vote by reading the ballot to me, and once my vote was complete it helped me by filling in the little ovals – a task many voters take for granted, but is something which is not attainable for an individual who is legally blind. IPAT literally changed my life.

/



I ask you to support SB2289 and help many North Dakota Citizens to remain engaged members of society. Thank you for your time and I am pleased to be here in person to tell you how important IPAT is to the citizens of this state.

Eugenie Lang  
709 West Interstate Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58803  
701-751-1101

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Michael Keller, a person with disabilities. I am here this morning because SB 2289 is important to me. More specifically, IPAT is important to me.

My story is a little bit different, actually a lot different from many that you will hear today. I was not born with a disability nor have I lived most of my life disabled. When I was 49 years old, just over six years ago, I suffered a stroke while at work in Grand Forks. Since then my right arm, hand and fingers quit working properly. I cannot bend my fingers and have limited strength in my right hand and arm. I have significant balance and other issues as well. As a result, I have not been able to work full time since January 7, 2009 or at all since February 2010.

After trying occupational and hand therapy, more than 15 medications, acupuncture, pain injections and an experimental brain surgery and clinical trial at Cleveland Clinic, my condition has not improved. I am still right handed; but my right hand does not work. I have lost my fine motor skills and am in constant pain.

In April 2014, my rehabilitation counselor at Vocational Rehabilitation referred me to IPAT for an assistive technology assessment – two terms I had not heard of before. I met Peggy at IPAT's AT device demonstration center here in Bismarck. During my assessment, I was able to try a number of AT options for computer access, ergonomics and worksite accommodations, including note taking and telephone usage.

IPAT's demonstration center afforded me the opportunity to explore a variety of non-traditional devices that I would not have otherwise known about. The assessment report prepared for me by IPAT gives me greater confidence with prospective employers when I am trying to re-enter the work

force. Without the services of IPAT and its AT device demonstration center, I would be less comfortable discussing my abilities while looking for a job.

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee, I would appreciate your support for engrossed SB 2289 appropriating \$160,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those who are aging and people with disabilities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Michael E. Keller  
827 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 215-1513

March 9, 2015

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Mary Rebenitsch, a retired home care nurse. I ask for your support of SB 2289 to fund assistive technology services for those that are aging.

For a number of years, IPAT has been one of my best resources in providing home safety devices for seniors living alone. It has provided safety alert systems that are simple to operate, which place an immediate call to family and friends in an emergency, without charging a burdensome monthly cost to elders on a fixed income. It has provided secure medication dispensers with a lock to prevent overdose, and an alarm to remind the forgetful to take their medications. These devices save man hours, and keep seniors out of emergency rooms, as they are better able to maintain their proper level of medication.

It has provided specialized phones to the visually and hearing impaired, with large numbers, lights and readouts of incoming calls, plus adjustable volume past what is readily available. One forgetful, 92 year-old, both hearing and vision impaired, with whom I communicate regularly on her IPAT phone, answers an incoming call with, "Just a minute while I push the blue button." That blue button gives her a volume boost that makes communication possible.

None of these devices are readily available in the commercial market, especially in the economical form that IPAT provides them. Many of the people in my personal experience who receive services from IPAT would not be able to afford what they hear advertised on TV, nor would they be able to do the shopping needed, so these, plus many other devices that IPAT provides, allow seniors to stay in their homes independently. Without these services, they would otherwise need a higher level of care at much more cost to the state. Thank you for hearing my request for support of SB2289, asking for a little money to save a lot.

Mary Rebenitsch 105 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW Mandan, ND 58554 667-1923





Real Possibilities in

#8

# North Dakota

SB 2289- SUPPORT  
Assistive Technology and Devices Funding  
March 9, 2015  
House Human Services Committee  
Josh Askvig - AARP North Dakota  
[jaskvig@aarp.org](mailto:jaskvig@aarp.org) or 701-989-0129

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Josh Askvig, Associate State Director of Advocacy for AARP North Dakota.

I am here to express support for SB 2289: which provides an appropriation to the Department of Human Services for assistive technology services. As you may know, assistive technology service providers face \$163,000 (12%) decrease in federal funding which is significant enough to impact the services they will be able to provide. Additionally, as you heard, there is a higher demand for assistive technology services across the state, particularly in the western counties. There is a need to add staff and operational costs to meet this demand.

The number one concern of North Dakotans as they age is how they can safely stay in their homes as long as possible. Assistive technology services keep older North Dakotans out of nursing homes by supporting their needs for safety and assistance at home. The funding in this bill will ensure that North Dakotans with assistive technology services needs can continue to live independent productive lives. SB 2289 will serve North Dakotans who have losses in vision, hearing, cognition, mobility, memory, communication or combination thereof, of all ages, across the entire state.

We ask you to give a DO Pass Recommendation to SB 2289.

#7

House Human Services

~~January 21, 2015~~  
March 9, 2015

SB 2289

**Testimony by Denise Harvey  
Protection and Advocacy Project**

P&A supports the funding requested for IPAT-Interagency Program for Assistive Technology to provide services and supports to meet the Assistive Technology needs of individuals with disabilities. P&A is aware of additional service needs in the Western part of the state. Assistive Technology plays a critical role for people with disabilities in creating and maintaining independence in all aspect of their lives. The use of assistive technology has been the key for many individuals in allowing persons to live independently, work, and to provide services related to important medical needs. IPAT provides an essential service in the state by providing evaluations, assistive technology loaning and expertise to meet the AT needs of North Dakota citizens. P&A has seen these services being greatly needed for individuals with varying types of disabilities, in all age ranges, and in a wide variety of settings.

#10 Handwritten



**University of Mary**  
America's Leadership University

DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

SB 2289

March 8, 2015

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee,

I am Dr. Carol Olson, an Associate Professor in the Occupational Therapy education program at the University of Mary. I would like to ask you to support SB 2289 requesting \$500,000 for the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those who are aging and people with disabilities.

The North Dakota Interagency Project for Assistive Technology (NDIPAT) has been extremely instrumental in my efforts to teach future occupational therapists and educators about assistive technology (AT). I have been having my students visit the IPAT center in Bismarck for the past 16 years to hear about the services and to explore some of the available technology. Here, they have been able to hear about the services provided by this organization (Assistive Technology demonstration center for individuals to see various types of technology available for persons with disabilities; AT swap shop to reuse/redistribute equipment that is no longer needed by one person, and try to get it to someone who does need it; assistance in accessing funding for various AT needs, and a rental/trial system for persons to try equipment before expending significant funds to purchase something that may not work). After graduation, these students are then able to share this information and resource with their colleagues and clients.

I have also used this service personally to identifying appropriate equipment to help my father live more independently and with a higher quality of life. We were able to explore various hearing amplification systems, telephones, and magnification systems to compensate for his macular degeneration and hearing loss.

These services are extremely important, and are not available elsewhere. Although some devices can be expensive, putting finances towards this type of project could actually save the state, insurance companies, and individual's money in not purchasing something that may not work for the individual or by forcing people to move out of their own homes and to a nursing home where they would have the needed assistance. These services are not currently available elsewhere, so it is very important to continue funding NDIPAT.

I ask that you approve SB 2289 and allow this valuable service to continue in our state. Thank you.

*Carol Olson*

Carol Olson, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA  
Department of Occupational Therapy  
University of Mary  
7500 University Dr.  
Bismarck, ND 58504

March 9, 2015

SB 2289

#11

Handwritten

Dear House Human Services Committee Members:

I write to you regarding SB 2289 and funding for IPAT. I am a speech-language pathologist (SLP) in Bismarck, and have worked as an SLP in North Dakota for 7 years in long term care. IPAT has been an instrumental asset for the residents of the nursing homes I have worked in. I have turned to them on numerous occasions for their knowledge, resources, and equipment rental. With using IPAT as a resource, it has not only saved money for the patients and patient's families, but also for the Medicare/Medicaid system.

For example, in 2008, I was able rent a speech generating device for a patient following a stroke in which the resident's communication was impacted both receptively and expressively. The device rental, which was only \$20, saved the family a \$10,000 purchase of this device, and assisted us in determining a speech generating device that was more effective and less costly in increasing this patient's communication.

Just recently, I consulted with IPAT on a voice activated telecommunication system for multiple residents, and was able to collaborate and decide on a low cost, simple solution which required less training for the patient and less intervention with speech therapy, which decreases amount needed to bill Medicare, Medicaid, or other insurance companies. Because of IPAT's expertise, these residents are able to communicate independently with loved ones on the phone.

IPAT is an important program that is able to provide a voice and communication options to those who need it. I have seen a growth for the need for assistive technology as technology improves and is ever changing. IPAT has the knowledge and experience to continue to assist families and professionals in meeting the needs and advocating for individuals who have needs requiring the use of assistive technology.

Please support the IPAT funding in SB 2289, and I sincerely thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,  
Andrea Leftwich, M.S. CCC-SLP



SB2289  
3-9-15

#12

Chairman Robin Weisz and Members of the Human Services Committee:

I am writing you to urge your SUPPORT of SB 2289 to continue to meet the needs of North Dakota residents in need of assistive technology.

Together we can continue to meet the AT needs of those in our state by spending a little now to save a lot later – IPAT helps children succeed in school by providing teachers help in finding the right AT; IPAT supports people at work by matching their needs for AT to their worksite; IPAT keeps seniors out of nursing homes by supporting their needs for safety and assistance through AT at home."

As a Speech Language Pathologist I use this necessary resource on a continual basis to determine the most appropriate assistance/equipment for those with disabilities as well as relying on staff trained up to date with equipment and AT options. With my workload, I do not have the time nor the expertise to keep up with this constantly changing area. I feel confident that this resource has improved my service to those in need of AT in allowing them options prior to purchase.

My patients and I are constantly being contacted by individual vendors with the intent only to sell their expensive product which may not be the best fit device for my patient. IPAT always is my first recommendation. One example of this was a non-communicative individual with spastic cerebral palsy looking to further education. A vendor convinced the individual that his device would meet the individual's needs and the state of ND purchased this device to the tune of \$16000.00. A year later, the device was abandoned for a \$600 iPad with more capabilities. This was an expense that could have been avoided with the IPAT program.

Please be aware that

- IPAT faces a \$163,000 (12%) decrease in federal funding which is significant enough to impact the services IPAT will be able to provide.
- There is a higher demand for assistive technology (AT) services across the state, particularly in the western counties. IPAT needs to add staff and operational costs to meet this demand.

PLEASE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THIS INVALUABLE PROGRAM!

Sincerely,

Tracey M.E. Lockrem, MS/CCC  
Speech Language Pathologist  
Bismarck, ND

March 9, 2015

Chairman Weisz, and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Cari Duncan. My husband and I live in Sawyer, ND. We have three children, all boys, and each of them have varying degrees of disabilities.

The IPAT program is facing a 12% decrease in federal funding, and that scares me. A decrease in funds will impact IPAT's ability to provide needed services to individuals, like my boys, and at a time when there is a documented need for more services, especially in the Western part of our state.

Our testimony includes our 9 year old son, Sam. He's a boy that loves music, his dad's meatloaf and keeping family secrets on caramel roll recipes. Sam has average intelligence but also has Autism, ADHD, a learning disability, sensory processing disability, dyslexia and restless leg syndrome. He also struggles with long term and short term memory. Through all of that, Sam was showing signs that he could be more independent by using AT devices and we were ultimately led to IPAT, which is the only resource in the state that specializes in assistive technology.

IPAT was able to use doctor evaluations and school reports to gain an understanding of Sam's strengths and weaknesses and then took the time to personally meet him and work together to explore AT devices that would help him do his school work. We agreed on solutions that worked for Sam, to include specialized iPad apps for reading and writing, and a watch that tracks time visually. The use of these devices helps him be a more independent reader and writer. They decrease his dependency on a classroom aide and they help him to pay attention both at school and at home. I know that the IPAT staff are available to me, to Sam's teachers, and his related service staff to talk over ideas, concerns and address needs that assistive technology may be part of solving.

We understand that many people may not relate to or understand our children's disabilities and their needs, but we know that IPAT does. My son feels empowered when he's self-sufficient, and IPAT wants to help others with similar struggles who may be people with chronic illnesses, those who have been in an accident, born with disabilities, or those who are aging and just need a little help to stay home. IPAT's expertise makes large and small differences in all of our communities by helping the people who live there find

and use assistive technology. We all want be productive members of society, and we want our sons to be as independent and productive as possible; IPAT can help us do that.

I am currently the chair of our local autism support group in Minot, and I am participating in Partners in Policymaking. My husband and I recently became members of the IPAT consumer advisory council. We hope the addition of our voices in our communities will help make services for people with disabilities matter, including assistive technology services.

Cari Duncan  
401 Vine Street W  
Sawyer, ND 58781  
701-624-2184

#14

March 9, 2015

RE: SB 2289

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of SB 2289. I am a physical therapist here in the Bismarck-Mandan area, working primarily with children with various disabilities and their families. Our therapy department has had a very close working relationship with IPAT for the past several years. With all the rapid changes in technology and adapted equipment, it is difficult for therapists to keep up with what is the newest device. We have consulted with staff at IPAT and have borrowed/loaned various equipment items from them. By using the resources of IPAT, we are able to ensure that the equipment we recommend for our patients/families is functional, practical and affordable for the child and the family. It gives us and the child/family a chance to trial the equipment and become familiar with it prior to purchasing it. This helps us avoid unnecessary expense to the family and/or the insurance companies because we have already determined that the device we are recommending really is what is best for the child/family at the time.

IPAT has always been easily accessible and willing to work with us and our patients. If their resources were not available to us, patients/families/insurance companies would be paying for equipment that does not work for the child/family. The IPAT staff is able to keep current with the constantly changing assistive technology development. They have equipment available for a variety of needs for people with disabilities or those who are aging. This includes AT for vision, hearing, mobility, communication, cognition, memory and many combinations of those. These services are available for all ages and any type of disability, including cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injuries, macular degeneration, etc.

In conclusion, I would ask that you support SB 2289 to provide additional funding for IPAT, to offset decreases in federal funding and to assist in continuing to build a statewide AT program to meet increasing demands across the state of North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bahe, PT, MPT



SB 2289

#15



**University of Mary**  
*America's Leadership University*

**Program in Physical Therapy**

March 9, 2015

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, as Director of the University of Mary's Program in Physical Therapy Program, I am writing to ask you to support SB 2289 in the upcoming biennium for the purpose of supporting assistive technology services for those that are aging and people with disabilities.

I am in support of funding assistive technology services for 2 main reasons. First, the ND Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) has been highly supportive and collaborative in the education of our physical therapy students. It is imperative that our students recognize the valuable services IPAT provides to assist people with disabilities and the aging population with functional and community mobility and the ability to stay in their homes. Our students learn first-hand what is available, how to access, and then apply their findings in clinical situations.

Secondly, and more importantly, as a healthcare provider for both people with disabilities and aging adults, I have witnessed first-hand the incredible value of assistive technology in assisting people with employment, active participation in education, in the community, and in the ability to be safe in their homes. IPAT is able to provide high and low tech assistive devices such as computer access and power mobility, to assistive technology services such as coordination of services and evaluation of individual needs. Without these services, many individuals would not be safe living in their homes, would not be active and participative community members, and would not be financially independent as they would not gain employment.

Therefore, I strongly support passage of SB 2289 to fund assistive technology services. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Dockter, PT, PhD  
Fellow of the APTA Education Leadership Institute  
Professor and Chair, Department of Physical Therapy  
University of Mary  
Bismarck, ND 58504

SB 2289  
3-9-15

#16

Chairman Weisz, members of the House Human Services Committee, I am David Valenzuela, a Minerals Manager with the USDA Forest Service, husband, and father to two young adults, one of which has special needs (cerebral palsy). I am asking you to support Senate Bill 2289, which would provide assistive technology services for all North Dakotans.

Our family has adapted to the needs of a child with cerebral palsy, and we could not have made some of those adaptations without the help of specialists. Trained assistive technology specialists have been able to assess our family situation and provide us the best options for how to solve very basic life support problems.

As our daughter, Katelyn, has grown into a beautiful 19 year old young lady, so has her body weight (145 lbs.). My wife, Deanne, and I have reached our 50's and our balance, strength and backs just cannot safely care for Katelyn without the help of assistive technology. At this point, bathing Katelyn safely is the most critical need we have. We decided to reach out to IPAT for help and were very satisfied with the level of professional services we received.

IPAT came to our home and assessed options for safely bathing Katelyn. Currently, two people must carry her from the bedroom to the bathroom, step into the tub, and set her down in a special chair. We do this in reverse to get her back into bed for dressing, only this time the tub and floor can be wet and slippery. Given the small size of our bathroom, there is no possible way to lift properly, so my back gives out and we run the risk of slipping on the wet surfaces.

IPAT's recommendations have led to a decision to install a lift: system that will safely transfer Katelyn from her wheelchair and into and out of the tub. Hopefully, the lift: will be installed by the end of February. We are grateful for IPAT's help in solving this problem, but they did not stop there. They also assessed ways to make Katelyn more independent around the home through the use of automatic door openers, touchless faucets and light switches, threshold ramps, etc. With the knowledge and credibility of IPAT, we were successful in portraying the need for these items, all of which will improve her quality of life.

If IPAT were not available to assess our situation and make recommendations for assistive technology, we do not know who else could have helped us. We have struggled throughout the years to find the right technology to meet Katelyn's challenges for every-day living. We sincerely wish we had turned to IPAT earlier, as it truly would have improved our entire family's quality of life.

They provide a critical, personalized service that leads to customized solutions, improving the health and safety of families and increasing individual independence. I know IPAT provides these services in many different settings and for young and old alike. These services are integral for keeping families together and individuals out of care facilities.

Senate Bill 2289 would support a higher quality of life for North Dakota families, and the need for continued support of these essential services has to have increased with the exploding population in the western part of the state. I ask you to please support this Bill.

Our family thanks you for your consideration in this matter.



David Valenzuela – PO Box 2345 – Watford City, ND 5885