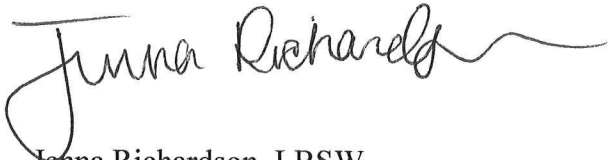


February 1st, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jenna Richardson, and I am a social worker at Spectra Health in Grand Forks, ND. I have been employed there for the past two years and specialize in working with individuals who are homeless or at-risk for losing their housing. I am writing to support the passage of HB1440. I have seen an immensely positive impact of the North Dakota Rent Bridge program on eviction prevention with many of our patients at Spectra Health. However, many renters in Grand Forks are subject to fees for late payment of rent. Consequently, while they may be able to have their rent paid by the Rent Bridge program, these community members must struggle to find a way to pay the accumulation of late fees that can increase daily. HB1440 would assist renters by minimizing the stress of facing ever-increasing late fees that were accumulated while obtaining and waiting for rent assistance. HB1440 would be a great contribution to the State of North Dakota by saving taxpayers the cost of providing services to individuals experiencing homelessness and by creating an additional safety net to prevent an increase in homeless individuals and families across our state. The current pandemic has placed a great deal of stress on a variety of community structures, and North Dakota renters have been at the heart of the struggle. HB1440 is a great start to better assist this population in their recovery from the pandemic and will ultimately save taxpayer dollars by keeping them in their homes.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jenna Richardson", with a long, flowing horizontal line extending to the right.

Jenna Richardson, LBSW

Spectra Health

Grand Forks, ND