

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2226
Related to the Amendment to Senate Bill 2226
House Committee on Industry, Business and Labor**

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Submitted by Cheryl Kary, Ph.D.

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Chairperson Klein and members of the Committee:

My name is Cheryl Kary and I am the Director of the Sacred Pipe Resource Center, a local non-profit serving the American Indian population in Bismarck and Mandan.

I would like to offer this written testimony in support of SB 2226, relating to regulation of residential end-of-life facilities. I have had the opportunity to review the Gaia Home model, the development of residential homes in which 24-hour end-of-life care is provided in a quiet, home setting, and I am in full support of this option for those contemplating end-of-life care decisions.

It is easy to see the need that this model fills for family-based and culturally-competent options. As a Native-serving organization, we see the gaps in services in so many programs and services that do not take into account the need for including extended family, providing strong family supports, and making room for cultural ways of being. This model not only provides for all of those options, it also takes into account the need for physical facilities that reflect the human need for connection and support. We support this option as well because it does not seek to supplant any current options but rather seeks to enhance the continuum of services available for individuals and families going through very difficult times of life.

We encourage your support of this Amendment that paves the way for the Gaia Home, and potentially other organizations as well, to enhance the continuum of services in a culturally-appropriate and compassionate manner.