

Berube, Risa

From: NDLA, H CHIEF - Whetham, Donna
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 3:24 PM
To: NDLA, H APP
Subject: FW: Appeal for NDBIN - HD 1012

From: Admin-Legislative Council <lcouncil@ndlegis.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 3:00 PM
To: NDLA, H CHIEF - Whetham, Donna <hchief@ndlegis.gov>
Subject: FW: Appeal for NDBIN - HD 1012

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From: Amber Christiansen <amber@progressivetherapyassociates.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 2:59 PM
To: Admin-Legislative Council <lcouncil@ndlegis.gov>
Subject: Appeal for NDBIN - HD 1012

North Dakota Legislators and Who It May Concern,

I am a licensed speech-language pathologist and certified brain injury specialist in North Dakota, writing to appeal to you to reconsider proposed funding changes and restore funding to the North Dakota Brain Injury Network. Please **restore brain injury funding in HD 1012, which proposes a 50% reduction in funding for the North Dakota Brain Injury Network**. I provide restorative and compensatory cognitive-communication therapy to adolescents and adults with brain injury at Progressive Therapy Associates, a private practice clinic in Fargo, North Dakota. I also provide telemedicine services across the state. I am not paid by, nor do I represent the NDBIN; however, I view the NDBIN as a valuable resource to myself, colleagues, patients, and the state of North Dakota.

Over the years, the NDBIN has developed resources, trainings, and support tools to aid in research, professional development, and survivor education. They have become a community of care for cognitive, physical, emotional, and medical resources and direction for brain injury survivors and their families.

Over the years, the NDBIN has worked hard to address the disparity and inequality in healthcare funding and established supports for those within the brain injury population compared to other medical diagnoses, as this is often a misunderstood diagnosis due to the “invisible”—but very real—presentation. Due to the chronic, neurodegenerative, and life-altering nature of a brain injury diagnosis, resources across an individual’s life span are integral to optimize recovery outcomes and increase individuals’ abilities to be productive members of our state. The resources provided by NDBIN help individuals manage chronic symptoms, navigate a complicated healthcare and legal system, and connect professionals with one another to provide top-notch care. This has been especially the case for my more rural patients

(as many in the state are!), as I am not always able to direct them to additional resources local to them in the way the NDBIN is able.

I recognize that there are many worthy designations for our tax dollars, but to remove funding from the only such organization in our state would be a grievous hardship for the many North Dakota citizens experiencing life with a brain injury. I believe that reducing funding would negatively impact the physical, cognitive, and emotional health support resources available for members of the brain injury community, medical providers, caregivers, and family members of our wonderful state.

I appreciate your time and consideration on this very important matter.

A very proud lifelong North Dakotan and Brain Injury survivor advocate,

Amber L. Christiansen, MS, CCC-SLP, CBIS, ADHD-RSP

Licensed Speech-Language Pathologist

Certified Brain Injury Specialist

Certified ADHD Rehabilitation Service Provider

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