

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

## Testimony on House Bill 1497

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Submitted by Janelle Mitzel, Development Homes, Inc.

Chairman Klemin & Committee Members,

Thank you for your consideration of a **Do Not Pass** recommendation on HB 1497. This bill will be detrimental to the charitable organization I represent.

### Development Homes, Inc.(DHI):

- DHI is a non-profit organization in Grand Forks providing community-based support services to persons with disabilities from all over ND.
- DHI has residential services including seven group homes, two duplex facilities, a multi-unit autism living center, a transitional living center and independent living settings.
- DHI provides vocational services including job training and placement, and family services including respite care and in-home support.
- DHI serves approximately two hundred individuals from children to adults, serving through all stages of life.
- DHI is currently the 8<sup>th</sup> largest employer in Grand Forks, employing 450 to 500 people. Our economic footprint is vital to this community.

This bill will drastically limit the number of charitable sites that an organization can operate, forcing Development Homes to surrender long-standing sites that have been developed over many years and provide significant revenue to support our crucial services. Development Homes currently has thirteen sites statewide.

Development Homes gaming is unique compared to many organizations in that we offer full-service gaming to collaborate with our partners in the hospitality industry. Full-service gaming includes blackjack, paddlewheels, bingo, paper pull tabs, prize boards, coin boards, sports pools, simulcast horse racing, and etabs. It takes expertise, experience, full-time staffing, inventory, equipment, money and gaming management to operate successfully and fulfill regulatory and legislative statutes. We are not just a charity that “puts machines only in and lets the bar do all of the work”.

### Development Homes Gaming Revenue Uses:

- Provides financial funds necessary to supplement new projects, such as bricks & mortar. The \$900,000 DHI autism living center was funded through HUD with matching grants from DHI charitable gaming.
- Specialized adaptive equipment & urgent/crisis care needs for persons served.
- Basic care needs, such as eyeglasses, shoes, and clothing, especially for our children served with their continued growth and ever-changing needs.
- Specialized training for professional staff including nurses, social workers, and expert management.
- Grants to ND communities funding local needs, including police equipment, literacy adaptive equipment and software, drug & alcohol prevention, substance abuse and mental health professional facilitators, daycare facility equipment, and promotion of local community events.

Charitable gaming is particularly important to this organization as we rely on those dollars to sustain our mission. DHI would appreciate a **Do Not Pass** recommendation on this bill.