

SB 2014 (2025 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY)
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS DIVISION
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HONORABLE DAVID MONSON, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 20, 2025
TESTIMONY OF BRUCE MURRY FOR FRASER, LTD

Good Morning, Chairman Monson and members of the Government Operations Division of the House Appropriations Committee. I am Bruce Murry, a registered lobbyist for Fraser, Ltd. (Fraser) of Fargo, North Dakota. Fraser supports children, youth, and adults on their journeys toward independence through four main programs: independent living, transitional youth services, mental health, and childcare.

The appropriations of at least ten million dollars to the North Dakota Homeless Grant, administered by the North Dakota Housing Finance Agency, are key to these services. Rather than describe the mechanics of the program, we wanted to report the outcomes we see in real people's lives. These outcomes are all supported in part by your funding of NDHG.

Story 1: After losing his mother in a car accident, a young man's life unraveled. He got a girl pregnant, was evicted, and had nowhere to turn. Fraser's TYS gave him a place to stay, keeping him off the streets and offering stability. Grateful for this lifeline, he's now pursuing a part-time job to stand on his own. More than that, he wants to be a steady presence for his child, providing the care and support he missed growing up. Fraser has been his foundation to rebuild and move forward as a father.

Story 2: A mother of three faced dire circumstances when she arrived at Fraser's Transitional Youth Services (TYS), pregnant and living in a costly hotel. Struggling to support her two kids with a third on the way, she hit a low point when their father was deported just before the birth. Alone and homeless, she arrived at TYS in tears, saying, "I had nowhere to go and no way to support my children." With Fraser's help—financial aid, resume support, job placement, and care for her kids—she's found hope. Now, she's eager to build a stable life for her family and reestablish contact with her children's father.

Story 3: Hoping for another chance after incarceration, a man found himself homeless and shunned. Each day was a fight to survive, with staying warm the hardest part. Fraser

offered him comfort and a fresh start. Welcomed by staff who listen and provide one-on-one support, he's working to stand on his own again. His hope? A place to call home. Fraser's help has been a lifeline in his battle to reclaim his future.

Story 4: Moving to North Dakota to pursue opportunities was tougher than he expected. Unable to find work and running out of money, he turned to Fraser. In just one month, he's learned the city, landed a job, and secured an apartment—thanks to Fraser's support. Grateful for a partner at his lowest, he aims to be independent by year's end, dreaming of owning a house, car, and a solid job. Fraser turned his struggle into a stepping stone.

Fraser also believes that appropriations to the Housing Incentive Fund of at least fifty million dollars are crucial to supporting that competitive funding process. With this assistance, the investment is multiplied to yield almost a five-fold value in total housing projects. Over time, this greatly improves the availability of safe, decent housing in our state.

Fraser also recommends NDHFA renew education to developers on the concept of "visitability". Visitability involves considering simple features at the time of construction, such as: no or few steps to enter the main level (for future ramps); wider doorways to accommodate a wheelchair, and a bathroom on the main floor. These features are inexpensive at the time of construction but avoid expensive remodeling if a resident with disabilities needs the space in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you this morning. Fraser appreciates the work of this committee to ensure more North Dakotans have access to housing.