

House Bill 1015

69th Legislative Assembly

Senate Appropriations – Government Operations Division

Written Testimony

March 7, 2025

Chairman Wanzek and all committee members,

My name is Chelsey Williams and I am a member of the North Dakota Community Corrections Association [NDCCA]. I am providing written testimony in support of House Bill 1015 which (among other financial items) calls for the allocation of funding to line item Community Service Supervision Grants [First Engrossment: Page 2 / Line 1 & Page 2 / Section 4] on behalf of the North Dakota Community Corrections Association in the amount of \$315,000 for the upcoming biennium [2025-2027]; the original amount was \$350,000 when House Bill 1015 was introduced.

To those who are unfamiliar with the North Dakota Community Corrections Association, the NDCCA was established in 1995 and is composed of fifteen agencies located across North Dakota that monitor adult/juvenile offenders in the community who are ordered to complete community service as part of a court ordered sentence or as ordered by a probation department. Community service is a multifaceted tool as it can be used as an alternative to incarceration, a direct sanction by courts and drug courts, can be worked to pay off court ordered fines or supervision fees or implemented as an intermediate measure for supervised probation offenders.

Benefits of Community Service to Communities & Successfulness of Community Service

- 1) Allows offenders to remain in the community to continue their employment, education and maintain their family unit.
- 2) Offenders can learn life/work skills and maybe even gain employment at a community service work-site.
- 3) Is an opportunity for offenders to learn from their destructive behavior and change their behavioral and thinking patterns for the positive.
- 4) Serves as a restorative purpose as it requires offenders to repay their debt to their local community.
- 5) Non-profit organizations and government entities save on payroll when utilizing community service workers.
- 6) NDCCA covers offenders with volunteer workers insurance to ensure their wellbeing and so that the non-profits we work with do not accrue that risk or cost.
- 7) Communities can save money in jail costs when community service is used as an alternative to incarceration.
- 8) With local jails/prisons being filled to maximum capacity, community service is needed now more than ever in order to ease the high rates of incarceration.

Community service is an essential program and it is also a fiscally smart option and I would like to demonstrate this by sharing some impressive data which I think shows why community service is a valuable and successful sentencing tool and should continue to be supported. So for some background information, the NDCCA was granted funding during the North Dakota 68th Legislative Session (2023) in the amount of \$350,000 in Senate Bill 2015 [Section 1. Appropriation / Community service supervision grants] and during the time frame of January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024:

- The clients working with the NDCCA performed 47,732 hours of community service.
- When community service is sentenced in lieu of jail time, it is typically accepted that 10 hours is the equivalent of 1 day in jail. It is also estimated that it costs between \$70 to \$100 per day to house an inmate at a correctional facility; therefore, a minimum of \$334,124 up to \$477,320 was saved in jail costs across North Dakota.
- The total number of hours of 47,732 worked by community service clients is the equivalent to 1,193 weeks of full-time work at 40 hours per week. This means non-profit agencies in North Dakota received the equivalent of almost 23 [22.9] full-time employees from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024 at no

cost to them. That is \$381,856 saved in wages for non-profits agencies based on a wage of \$8.00 per hour.

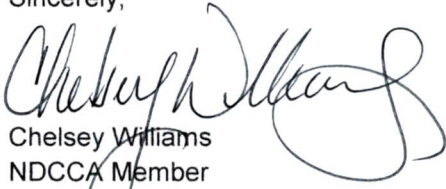
The numbers are even more impressive is when a 5 year time span is reviewed. From January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024 the clients working with the NDCCA performed a total of 122,998 hours of community service. This means that non-profit agencies saved \$983,984 in payroll expenses based on a wage of \$8.00 per hour. Further savings of \$860,986 to \$1,229,998 was saved in jail costs across North Dakota when the estimated cost to house an inmate in jail/prison is \$70.00 to \$100.00 per day and typically 10 hours of community service is the equivalent to 1 day in jail. Those savings (payroll expenses and costs of incarceration) total \$1,844,970 to upwards of \$2,213,964 in savings across the State of North Dakota from 2020 through 2024.

Monies received will be divided among the fifteen agencies over the upcoming biennium so that the NDCCA can continue monitoring community service offenders and supporting local communities. Funding will be used to help each agency offset the costs of maintaining a place of business, purchasing office supplies required for daily duties, financially supporting staff and allowing the NDCCA to remain as an alternative to incarceration for courts and probation departments who are enforcing state laws. The NDCCA does not solely depend on the State of North Dakota for funding; however, monies received greatly impact the effectiveness of each office. Other sources of income vary program to program, but in general include program fees as paid by offenders, grants and city/county funding.

In conclusion, I would like to impress upon you the importance of the North Dakota Community Corrections Association as we request your support for funding in House Bill 1015 [First Engrossment] for the amount of \$315,000 (Community Service Supervision Grants). We are a valuable resource to the State of North Dakota and its citizens as we are making a difference in the lives of offenders, helping non-profit organizations reach their goals and can be utilized as a way to lower incarceration rates as well as incarceration costs. We are greatly appreciative of any funding previously provided and believe we should continue to be funded because in a difficult budgeting session, we are a fiscally good decision.

Included with this testimony are letters of support from across the State of North Dakota in support of funding for the North Dakota Community Corrections.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chelsey Williams', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Chelsey Williams
NDCCA Member
Grand Forks Community Service Program
Lobbyist ID #1028

Barnes County States Attorney

Tonya L. Duffy
State's Attorney

Tanya Zachrison
Administrative Assistant



Trent Jackson
Assistant State's Attorney

LaDonna Anderson
Victim Witness Coordinator

February 12, 2025

RE: House Bill 1015

Dear Grant Committee:

The Barnes County State's Attorney Office is in full support of the Community Service Program in Barnes County, ND.

Jenn Runge, Barnes County Community Service Coordinator, does a great job in keeping all the records up to date and reporting any hours completed or not completed by a certain date, as ordered by the Court.

I feel the Community Service Program is beneficial in Barnes County as several individuals learn from this program. Some learn that their actions do have consequences by means of a mild punishment and others learn about work, work ethics, responsibilities and some even find gainful employment by participating in the community service program.

The Barnes County States Attorney's Office encourages the continuation of the Community Service Program as I feel it is an asset to our community.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Tonya Duffy.

Tonya Duffy
Barnes County State's Attorney

230 4th St. NW, Room 301, Valley City, ND 58072

Phone: 701-845-8526

Fax: 701-845-8543

Email: states_attorney@barnescounty.us

City of Valley City
Municipal Court
216 2nd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072
Phone # 701-845-3110

February 13, 2025

Community Corrections Association:

Community Service has been a true asset to our court system, it has allowed defendants that are unable to pay a fine to repay their debt without undo financial hardship to themselves. In some cases it has also helped the defendant obtain a job. We appreciate the support this service has received from the community and also what the program has done for our community.

Sincerely,

Chris Westerhausen

Chris Westerhausen
Clerk of Municipal Court
216 2nd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072

VALLEY CITY

POLICE

Chief Nicholas Horner
216 2nd Avenue NE
Valley City, ND 58072
Office: (701) 845-3110
Fax: (701) 845-3100

I am writing this letter in reference to House Bill 1015. The Valley City Police department has been able to utilize the Community Service workers who have been sentenced in cases happening in and around Barnes County and the City of Valley City. Having these workers offer extra help, such as cleaning, reorganizing, painting as well as other projects, has proven to be beneficial in many ways. It has allowed these individuals to fulfill their community service requirements as well as saving taxpayer money and helping everyone in the community.

Most recently the Police Department wanted to build a training room with movable walls in order to run different scenarios. As we received help from citizens who were sentenced to Community service hours, this project was able to happen at minimal labor cost to the city and this department. Walls were constructed, painted, and strengthened by these individuals. As a department we are very satisfied with the help we received. In the near future, we are hoping to have the community service people to finish up the project with the movable walls.

The community service people are also partnered with Valley City State University as well as other businesses where they are able to offer help in a variety of ways. This allows the university and businesses the opportunity to have several projects completed while decreasing the monies that would be paid out if the community service was not available.

The Valley City Police Department is in support of the Community Service Program and welcome the help it provides for not only our department but the community altogether.



Chief of Police
Nicholas Horner

VALLEY CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

241 3RD AVENUE NE
VALLEY CITY, NORTH DAKOTA 58072



(P) 701-845-3351
(F) 701-845-4588

RE: Community Service program

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Scott Magnuson, I am the fire chief in Valley City ND. I would like to show my support for the Barnes county community service program, the individuals that Jenn Runge has brought into our facility to do their community service time have been very helpful to us. We have had them help around our fire station as we don't have staffing to help keep our facility as clean and organized as we would like.

Jenn always works with the people to help them get the things that we want them to do completed. Jenn takes her job very serious and always checks in and when they are done, she makes sure it is done the way it should be.

I believe that we should keep this program in our community it is good for the citizens and for the people that need to provide the services. And I also support the program and I hope to see the funding continued.

If you would like to further discuss my views on the program please feel free to contact me.

Scott Magnuson
Fire Chief
smagnuson@valleycity.us
(701) 845-3351



Ramsey County State's Attorney's Office

524 4th Avenue NE, Unit 16

Devils Lake, ND 58301

Tel: 701-662-7077

E-mail: ramseysa@nd.gov

Daniel Howell, State's Attorney

Meggan Crosby, Assistant State's Attorney

Kim Perkuhn, Paralegal

Dehan Schwan, Paralegal

Nancy Watt, Legal Assistant

February 18th, 2025

Re: Support of House Bill 1015

House Appropriations Committee Members,

My name is Daniel Howell, and I am the recently appointed State's Attorney for Ramsey County, North Dakota. I want to begin by thanking you for your time and consideration of this letter in support of House Bill 1015 in the 69th Legislative Assembly of North Dakota. Of specific relevance to Ramsey County is Section 2, Community Service Supervision Fund, which is the primary source of funding for the Lake Region Community Service Program (LRCSP).

In the last five years the LRCSP has supervised and coordinated over 4,000 hours of community service time, or \$40,000 at \$10 an hour, that was given to our communities in lieu of incarceration and fines. As State's Attorney I plan to increase Ramsey County's utilization of the LRSCP so that defendants have more exposure to and experience in serving the community they live in, as I view that as the primary function of community service sentences in the criminal justice system.

The LRCSP is a vital tool to the criminal justice system in North Dakota and is an important alternative to incarceration that gives back to our communities at the same time. I urge the Legislature to pass House Bill 1015, as it ensures funding for this vital tool.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Howell

Ramsey County State's Attorney

524 4th Ave. NE Unit 16

Devils Lake, ND 58301

701-662-7078

ramseysa@nd.gov

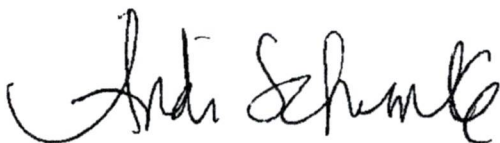
February 10, 2025

Matt Obrien,

My name is Andi Schimke and I am the Clerk of District Court for Dickey County. I have been the Clerk for 28 years and have worked with Matt Obrien as Chief of Police for the City of Oakes. Oakes Police department has a Community Service Agreement with Dickey County. There is a need for a local community service program for Dickey County. Matt Obrien as administrator of the program supervises the hours ordered by a Judge in District Court, manages cases of compliance and non-compliance using File and Serve. The communication from Chief Obrien to the court is timely.

My office supports having a local community service department located in our county.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andi Schimke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andi" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Schimke".

Andi Schimke

Clerk of District Court



CITY OF DICKINSON MUNICIPAL COURT

COURT CORRESPONDENCE

38 1ST Street West, Dickinson ND 58601

O: 701-456-7770

F: 701-456-7727

TO: ND Legislative Assembly
FROM: City of Dickinson Municipal Court, Judge Robert Keogh
DATE: February 10, 2025
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK

I strongly support the community service program. It is a valuable option for the court, as we have many defendants, including young persons, who have difficulty paying fines. It also provides an opportunity for some to provide a service to the community.

Dated this 10th day of February, 2025.

Dickinson Municipal Court Judge, Robert Keogh



Mackoff Kellogg
Law Firm

38 Second Avenue E., Suite A
Dickinson, ND 58601

(701) 456-3210
Fax (701) 227-4739
Email: firm@mackoff.com
Online: www.mackoff.com

Christina M. Wenko*+
Stephen A. Fetch#
Morgan M. Jacobs^

Of Counsel:
Charles J. Peterson
Jason J. Henderson *+%

* Also Licensed in Montana
+ Also Licensed in South Dakota
Also Licensed in Georgia
^ Also Licensed in Wyoming
% Admitted to US Tax Court

H.A. Mackoff, 1889-1963
Theo. Kellogg, 1904-1990
Ward M. Kirby, 1922-1993

February 10, 2025

ND Legislative Assembly

Re: House Bill 1015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the City Prosecutor for the City of Dickinson, and I am writing in support of the Community Service Program for the Southwest Region of North Dakota. This program has been instrumental in giving prosecutors an alternative to jail, fines and fees when the circumstances require it.

I mostly use this program with young, first-time criminal offenders. I personally think it is a meaningful way of teaching young, first time criminal offenders that actions have consequences. More importantly, it requires them to go back into their community and do something positive.

Funding for these types of programs is critical to the justice system. I encourage the committee to continue to fund these worthwhile, and in some instances, life changing programs.

Sincerely,

Christina M. Wenko, Attorney

RE: House Bill No. 1015

2/17/25

Section 2. Appropriate – Community Services Supervision Fund

To whom it may concern:

My name is Danielle Seibel, and I am the Volunteer Program Manager for Homeward Animal Shelter in Fargo, ND. I have been a partner of the Community Service Program for nearly two years. I believe funding a program that is beneficial to the success of the court system, recipient organizations like Homeward, and the individual working towards rehabilitation, is money well spent.

Whether serving a sentence or for personal enjoyment, volunteering is of our own will and determining where to start can be so daunting to anyone that it paralyzes one from taking that first step. But for the average offender who is juggling the same responsibilities as the rest of us, just having to figure out where they can go to serve their hours can be an overwhelming task, especially if there's feelings of shame or embarrassment involved.

The Community Service Program removes this barrier by coordinating placement options for the individuals and even making the initial contact with the organizations on behalf of the offender; instantly alleviating some of that stress. This simple facilitation is effectively improving the odds that a person will take responsibility for their actions and complete their required service hours.

For most, the reward for volunteering is the feelings of fulfillment from contributing to a cause greater than themselves. Those completing mandated service hours also have an opportunity to feel the pride and liberation of settling their debt. It is equally advantageous to organizations that operate solely on donated time to further their mission.

Please consider how efficient and impactful this program is. Through funding initiatives like The Community Service Supervision, you are truly serving the needs of our entire community.

Thank you for your time and for your service,

Danielle Seibel

Foster and Volunteer Program Manager

Homeward Animal Shelter

1201 28th Avenue North | Fargo, ND 58102

P: 701-364-2618 (Direct)

dseibel@homewardonline.org

volunteer@homewardonline.org

foster@homewardonline.org



Office of the State's Attorney

February 14, 2025

ND Legislative Assembly
North Dakota State Capitol
600 E Boulevard Ave
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Distinguished Members of the Legislative Assembly,

I am writing to you in support of the Greater Grand Forks Community Service & Restitution Program. The organization provides drug testing to criminal defendants released on bond and administers community services hours imposed by the court.

An investment into this program saves taxpayer dollars and ensures accountability within the criminal justice system. Allowing low risk offenders to complete community service hours in lieu of jail time frees up space at our correctional center, which all too often is running near or at capacity. The administration of drug testing imposed by the court as a condition of bond for criminal defendants helps to keep our communities safer while also helping to alleviate correctional center capacity issues.

The program is very well run with low overhead. While a majority of its revenue is generated from fees from defendants using the program, the state dollars invested into the program over the years has become an essential portion of its operational budget.

I encourage you to continue your ongoing support for community service programs throughout the state as it has proved to be a very worthwhile investment. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Haley L. Wamstad
Grand Forks County State's Attorney

Re: Community Service Support

1 message

Jeff Klopfer <jeff@hellofreedomchurch.com>

Thu, Feb 20, 2025 at 8:39 AM

To: Chelsey Williams <gfcom@gfcomservice.org>

To our State and Local Leaders,

I am writing to you today in support of House Bill 1015 regarding the ND Community Corrections Association.

At Freedom Church, we have welcomed dozens of offenders into our building and into our community to serve out their sentences, offering them opportunities to give back to their community rather than sitting in jail.

Not only have we as an organization benefited from the generous help offered by these individuals, but we believe they themselves have benefitted tremendously in the way of understanding that they are valuable and that they have been created with a purpose. Many have expressed that they've been given back a sense of dignity by serving in our church.

Freedom Church treats these volunteers, as we call them, not as people who must simply be tolerated and kept separate from the rest of us, but as members of our church family who have a lot to offer. I have personally seen several community service volunteers become a permanent part of our volunteer teams. One in particular was hired as a part of our paid staff, and several have given their lives to Jesus right before my eyes!

We are thrilled to be a part of the community welcoming those who are paying retribution to their community through the act of service. We feel that it is our purpose to welcome those who are imperfect, struggling, and deeply broken-- just like the rest of us.

Please consider renewing and increasing the funding associated with this crucial service program.

With deep respect and gratitude,

**Jeff Klopfer**
Ministry Assistant308 DeMers Ave
Grand Forks, ND 58201
701.772.3117
jeff@hellofreedomchurch.com
www.hellofreedomchurch.com



120 2nd Street SE
PO Box 1530
Jamestown, ND 58402-1530
701-252-4830
emily@discoverjamestownnd.com
DiscoverJamestownND.com

June 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Jamestown Tourism and the Frontier Village to express my support for the community service program. As a growing organization in this community, we believe in the importance of fostering rehabilitation and offering opportunities for individuals to make positive contributions to society while serving their sentences.

Community service not only provides a practical means for individuals to fulfill their legal obligations, but also serves as a pathway for personal growth, skill development, and community engagement. By participating in service projects at the Frontier Village, individuals can gain valuable experiences, develop a sense of responsibility, and build relationships with others in the community.

I believe that investing in community service programs not only benefits the individuals involved, but also strengthens our community as a whole. By offering support, guidance, and resources to those sentenced to community service, we can help them successfully reintegrate into society and reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

I thank your organization for supporting this program and encourage continued support and expansion of its services.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily Bivens".

Emily Bivens
Executive Director
Jamestown Tourism



James River Community & Senior Center
419 5th St. NE
P.O. Box 1092
Jamestown, ND 58401
Phone: 701-252-2882
Fax: 701-252-2529
Toll Free 1-855-252-2882
www.jamesriverseniors.com

April 23, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

The James River Senior Citizens Inc located at 419 5th St. NE-(old Jamestown Hospital), utilizes the Community Service Program here at our location and at the location of our Bus Barn 510 10th Ave. SE. We are a non-profit, so it definitely helps us when we can utilize Community Service to do cleaning, shredding, cleaning of buses and the bus barn, moving records from one location to the other, keeping the outside of the building picked up and looking nice, cleaning windows etc and not have to pay someone to do these tasks. We truly like using Community Service to help us with tasks, as we feel it gives those serving Community Service a feeling of self-worth and self-respect that they are truly giving back to the community for their transgression. Most of the Community Service workers we deal with are just people who have made a mistake and want to feel they have done something to repay the community. We feel this is a worthy program and having the Community Service person work makes a bigger impact on them then just having to pay a fine. We feel paying a fine lets them off pretty easy and that they learn more and feel better about themselves if they actually have to work towards repaying their debt to society. Let's face it, our society today gets off too easy and always has an excuse for everything. Years ago, good hard work straightened out many who were headed down the wrong path. Let us give the same chances to the people in our community who are heading down the wrong path.

Sincerely

Rhonda Sahr

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rhonda Sahr".

James River Senior Citizens Inc

**Providing Meals, Transportation and Referral services in the ND Counties of Sheridan,
Stutsman and Wells**



BOB FERNANDES
Sheriff

LaMOURE COUNTY SHERIFF

P.O. Box 97, 202 4th Ave. NE
LaMoure, North Dakota 58458

Telephone: (701) 883-5720
Fax: (701) 883-5833

January 14, 2025

ND Legislative Assembly
North Dakota State Capitol
600 E. Boulevard Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear members of the Legislative Assembly,

I am writing to you in support of the community service programs that are currently in place throughout North Dakota. We have had our own community service program in LaMoure County for the past 6 years.

Community service programs along with other programs are used by the court system as an alternative to incarceration. This helps alleviate over crowding in our jails, eases the financial burden to taxpayers and allows individuals placed on community service to continue to work, provide for their families and contribute to their community. There have been instances in LaMoure County where individuals placed on community service have obtained employment with the non-profit organization upon completion of their court ordered community service.

I strongly encourage you to continue your support for the community service programs throughout North Dakota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert Fernandes", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Robert Fernandes
LaMoure County Sheriff



FALLON KELLY, STATE'S ATTORNEY
fkelly@dtel.net

January 14, 2025

Re: Community Service

This Office is writing to express our support for the Community Service Program and Community Service Director/Coordinator.

The State's Attorney office carries out a wide spectrum of duties including, prosecution of criminal and traffic related offenses, and juvenile justice. This is in addition to our other responsibilities outlined in Chapter 11-16 of the North Dakota Century Code. In our work, we regularly rely on the Community Service Program.

The North Dakota Criminal Code sets forth specific goals in the criminal offenses and sentencing Chapter, which include; preventing re-offense of certain activity, deterrence, punishment, and rehabilitation. The Community Service Program is an essential tool utilized to meet these goals. Often times incarceration, fines, and fees are not an appropriate disposition in cases, so prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges must look for an alternative disposition to support the goals of the criminal and juvenile statutes. For example, indigent defendants of lower level criminal offenses may be unable to pay fines and fees, and the inability to do so cause them to continuously be brought back before the court to explain why they cannot pay. This is an unnecessary use of time and resources, if there is an appropriate alternative. Community service offers that alternative. It affords offenders an opportunity to understand that their actions have consequences without unnecessarily punishing their families or preventing them from using their limited means on other personal needs.

Moreover, incarceration is not always appropriate, especially in lower level offenses. Excessive fines may not work to hold people appropriately accountable if they are of vast means. Community service is an appropriate sentencing alternative to hold certain individuals accountable and affords offenders an opportunity give back to the community. They can feel a sense of worth and responsibility that they wouldn't otherwise get from sitting in jail or paying a fine.


Finally, community service is an excellent tool for young offenders that either cannot afford fines or in cases where their parents pay the fine. It's an appropriate way to not overly punish them, but also show them that their actions have consequences and hopefully set them on the appropriate path in life.

This Office is in full support of the Community Service Program. Without it, needless county and state resources would be wasted. I believe in the work of this Office, and Community Service is crucial to this

work. The Community Service Program supports the goals of this Office in representing the people in this community and the State of North Dakota

Thank you for your consideration of continuation of this great program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fallon Kelly', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke and a vertical stroke intersecting it.

Fallon Kelly
LaMoure County State's Attorney

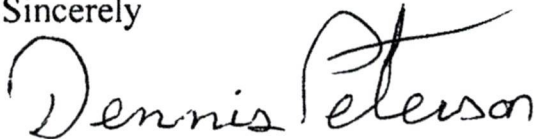
To whom it may concern:

My name is Dennis Peterson, and I am the groundskeeper at Lake LaMoure, in LaMoure County, ND. I have supervised community service workers for the past 5 years. All workers have been hard working and willing to work at any task I assigned them.

Community service has helped in the maintenance of the public lake grounds through accomplishing tasks that I needed extra help for. I strongly encourage the state legislature to continue funding this program.

I've seen former community service participants return to the lake to show their family and friends areas they helped to improve through the program.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dennis Peterson

Groundskeeper at Lake LaMoure

I was ordered several hours of community service. Sarah with LaMoure County was good to work with and set me up with all of the hours I needed to complete my sentence. Having my freedom was better than sitting in a jail cell. I was able to see my kids and continue to work to provide for them and myself.

Amutha 1/14/25

VERONA COMMUNITY CENTER
PO Box 31
205 South 7th Street
Verona, ND 58490
701-432-5812

2-12-25

RE: Benefits of Community Service

To Whom it May Concern:

We are the Verona Community Center, formerly the Verona Public School. When the school closed in the spring of 2005 a group of women embarked on the mission to find a way to preserve the building for the immediate Community's needs and to make it appealing for surrounding communities to also make use of our building for all kinds of events. We are proud to say that our mission is ongoing and to us a success!

Over the years we have had the opportunity to have Community Service Workers assigned to our facility to help us with all the work that goes into maintaining the inside and outside of a Community Building. They have been a joy to work with. I know that it has helped us here in Verona and I believe that just the communication and interaction with us here, who guide them in the work that needs to be done, not only has impacted their lives but also has made an impact on our lives too. Seeing what getting involved in a community does for themselves and everyone else. For example, being able to drive thru Verona in future years and say I helped plant those trees, I mowed that lawn around that Community Center and just knowing that their work here mattered to us and our Community.

I would encourage the state legislature to continue the funding of this program. It is one of the best ways to show those who happen to make an error in judgment in their life, that it is all it is, a mistake, and that doing Community Service is a way for them to correct that mistake and to be able to tell their story to others on how Community Service just may have helped them straighten out their road along life's journey.

Please continue this program as it helps the individual and the communities involved.

Respectfully Yours,

Kristy Maley

Kristy Maley, Supervisor of Verona Community Center
PO Box 31
Verona, ND 58490
701-432-5812 (office)
701-840-3075 (cell)



Empowering Neighbors. Strengthening Communities.

Jay Klabunde, Executive Director
Jeanine Kabanuk, Financial Director
Karen Terry, Assistant Director
Terry Peterson, Assistant Director

Dear North Dakota Legislators,

I am writing on behalf of the community service program here in Minot to help in your decisions regarding this program. My name is Karoline Vaagen, I am the manager of RSI Restore here. The store is a second hand store, training center for people with disabilities, and also a place for people to do their community service hours. We see a lot of people that have community service here and the surrounding area. Their help at the store is two-fold. Along with helping us keep up with the store, it helps bring new energies into our work environment, and letting us touch a few lives along the way. In the years as people that we have met need the little cheering on to pick themselves up or look at their situation a little differently we see the difference that is made in lives. In the community I see many people that have done their community service hours with us, many of them stop, chat, and give me an update on how their lives have changed for the good. In the last three years we have been able to hire at least five community service volunteers to better our company and themselves, especially since hiring good help is not an easy task as of late. I would highly encourage you to keep this program in place for the number of lives that it changes in our community. If you have any further questions please feel free to give me a call.

Thank you,

Karoline Vaagen
Restore Manager
(701) 837-9587



Empowering Neighbors. Strengthening Communities.

Jay Klabunde, Executive Director
Jeanine Kabanuk, Financial Director
Karen Terry, Assistant Director
Terry Peterson, Assistant Director

Dear North Dakota Legislators,

I am writing the letter on behalf of the Community Service program in Minot. My name is Shelby Labonte and in 2020 I got myself into quite a mess. I was given 100 hours of Community Service or 10 days in jail by the courts. I chose the community service. I will never forget the day I sat across the desk from the Community Service Coordinator and thought my life was over. I had lost my job and my fiancé had left me. As I sat there crying, she offered me tissues and compassion and told me that I could bring myself back up from this. I started working at one of the worksites and loved it. I was surrounded by caring people and found joy in my life again. The coordinator was always there with answers to all of my questions. When I completed my hours, the worksite offered me a job as they were impressed with my work and attitude and I am still working for the company today. I am now thankful that the judge gave me a chance by giving me the choice of community service over jail. I am proof that court ordered community service is a beneficial program and should be supported.

Shelby Labonte



Fallon M. Kelly

Ransom County State's Attorney

316 Main Street
P.O. Box 391
Lisbon, ND 58054-0391
telephone: 701-683-4123
fax: 701-683-4124
email: fkelly@drtel.net

January 14, 2025

Re: Community Service

This Office is writing to express our support for the Community Service Program and Community Service Director/Coordinator.

The State's Attorney office carries out a wide spectrum of duties including, prosecution of criminal and traffic related offenses, and juvenile justice. This is in addition to our other responsibilities outlined in Chapter 11-16 of the North Dakota Century Code. In our work, we regularly rely on the Community Service Program.

The North Dakota Criminal Code sets forth specific goals in the criminal offenses and sentencing Chapter, which include; preventing re-offense of certain activity, deterrence, punishment, and rehabilitation. The Community Service Program is an essential tool utilized to meet these goals. Often times incarceration, fines, and fees are not an appropriate disposition in cases, so prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges must look for an alternative disposition to support the goals of the criminal and juvenile statutes. For example, indigent defendants of lower level criminal offenses may be unable to pay fines and fees, and the inability to do so cause them to continuously be brought back before the court to explain why they cannot pay. This is an unnecessary use of time and resources, if there is an appropriate alternative. Community service offers that alternative. It affords offenders an opportunity to understand that their actions have consequences without unnecessarily punishing their families or preventing them from using their limited means on other personal needs.

Moreover, incarceration is not always appropriate, especially in lower level offenses. Excessive fines may not work to hold people appropriately accountable if they are of vast means. Community service is an appropriate sentencing alternative to hold certain individuals accountable and affords offenders an opportunity to give back to the community. They can feel a sense of worth and responsibility that they wouldn't otherwise get from sitting in jail or paying a fine.

Finally, community service is an excellent tool for young offenders that either cannot afford fines or in cases where their parents pay the fine. It's an appropriate way to not overly punish them, but also show them that their actions have consequences and hopefully set them on the appropriate path in life.

This Office is in full support of the Community Service Program. Without it, needless county and state resources would be wasted. I believe in the work of this Office, and Community Service is crucial to this work. The Community Service Program supports the goals of this Office in representing the people in this community and the State of North Dakota

Thank you for your consideration of continuation of this great program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long horizontal line with several diagonal strokes crossing it, including a prominent vertical one near the left end.

Fallon Kelly
Ransom County State's Attorney

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY
ROLETTE COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

PO BOX 1079, ROLETTE, NORTH DAKOTA, 58554 · PHONE (701)-477-3169

February 19, 2025

Greater Grand Forks Community Service & Restitution Program
311 S 4th Street, Suite 201
Grand Forks, ND 58201
Phone: (701) 775-3403

Re: Letter of Support, Rolette County

I consider it my privilege to provide this letter of support. This service provides for a Rolette County need that would otherwise be neglected. Without continued support the level of service will diminish.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/Brian D. Grosinger

Brian Grosinger
Rolette County State's Attorney



Sargent County Board of Commissioners

355 Main Street S., Suite 1
Forman ND 58032-4149
Phone: (701) 724-6241 EXT 108
FAX: (701) 724-6244

Scott Johnson, Gwinner

Letter of Support
House Appropriations
Government Operations Division
Executive Session

Good day legislators:

My Name is Scott Johnson. I am a County Commissioner for Sargent County; I am submitting this letter in support of Section 2 (Community Services Supervision Fund) in HB 1015.

Community service provides a way for offenders to give back to the community. Individuals who have given back to the community by giving of themselves through their labor, have experienced a stronger, more positive sense of self-esteem. I have seen this personally in Sargent County.

Please vote in Favor of HB 1015. Thank you for the great work you are doing in this Legislative session.

Dated this 12 day of Feb, 2025

County Commissioner

Scott Johnson

Letter of Support
House Appropriations
Government Operations Division
Executive Session

Legislators,

My name is Rick Bryant and I am an 18 year veteran of the Sargent County Sheriff's Department and also serve as Pastor at Milnor Lutheran Church. I am writing this letter to show my support of Section 2 (Community Services Supervision Fund) in HB 1015.

In my experience, a Community Service Program is a win-win for violators as well as for the community. It gives a violators a sense of pride and belonging in being able to serve a community in a positive way. Cash strapped communities can realize improvements at no cost and offenders can pay their debt to society regardless of their financial means. I have witnessed this personally over many years. Please support this wonderful program by voting favor of HB 1015. Thank you for your service to God, country, and state.

Blessings



Rick Bryant

Unit #4604

Sargent County Sheriff's Dept.
rbryant@nd.gov