

Date: March 10, 2025

To: North Dakota Senate Human Services Committee; Senator Lee, Chair

From: ElRoy Burkle, 4609 12D St NW, Garrison ND. Cell – 701-230-1973

Email: elroy.burkle@gmail.com

RE: Support of HB1485

I ask for your consideration for support on HB1485, increasing the monthly personal needs allowance for Medicaid recipients and including an inflation rider.

My mother, LaVina Burkle, was recently approved for Medicaid – Basic Care services effective January 1, 2025. She currently resides in the Basic Care Unit of the Wishek Living Center (WLC), Wishek, ND. When mom was 99 years and 11 months, she became ill with a severe bout of Influenza A (December 2022). She was independently living in an apartment connected to the WLC prior to this episode. After limited recovery, she believed it best to relocate to their Skilled Care Unit as a self-paid resident. WLC did not have a basic care unit at that particular time. Her personal funds fell below the \$3,000 Medicaid threshold during December of 2024 and she was approved for Medicaid Basic Care January 1, 2025. She currently resides at WLC – Basic Care wing. WLC was recently approved for basic care services so mom did not have to relocate to a different nursing home, which may have been very stressful and traumatic at 102 years of age.

As mom's POA (Power of Attorney) I assumed being the personal representative in all of her affairs. (Just a FYI, prior to December 2022, mom took care of all her obligations with very little input from me.) Her monthly personal allowance as a Medicaid Basic Care Recipient is \$135 per month. The rude awakening that this amount is to cover all of the over-the-counter medicines, landline phone, and any personal comfort items was going to be a challenge. HB 1485 proposed increase of \$10 per month to all Medicaid Resident Categories is needed and welcomed. The annual inflation adjustment provides recipients and their families with the knowledge that additional financial assistance will be provided.

I wish to praise all the people who have assisted my mom during the last 2 years plus and with the recent Medicaid Basic Care approval. The WLC staff, Wishek Pharmacy, and HHS Case Workers have been outstanding. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank Senator Erbele for getting me in contact with Senator Lee; and Senator Lee for getting me in contact with Ms. Aker to address issues/concerns. These actions were calming and sincerely appreciated.

In closing, please vote green for HB 1485. Thank you for your time and consideration to this request.

Please feel free to contact me at the cell phone number or email provided for any questions or clarifications.