

2023 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

HCR 3030

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HCR 3030
3/1/2023

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to consider studying homelessness and barriers to housing, including consideration of the effectiveness of the RentHelp program; the provision of housing financial support; legal assistance programs available to tenants; state, local, or federal educational programs for tenants and landlords regarding rights and responsibilities; month-to-month eviction rates by human service zone area; definitions of homelessness or homeless rates used by government entities; barriers to accessing housing; the manner in which homeless children receive services; historical rates of homelessness; and how a community based approach to homelessness may reduce rates of homelessness.

Chairman Weisz called the meeting to order at 3:52 PM.

Chairman Robin Weisz, Vice Chairman Matthew Ruby, Reps. Karen A. Anderson, Mike Beltz, Clayton Fegley, Kathy Frelich, Dawson Holle, Dwight Kiefert, Carrie McLeod, Todd Porter, Brandon Prichard, Karen M. Rohr, Jayme Davis, and Gretchen Dobervich present. All present.

Discussion Topics:

- Housing issues
- Cost effectiveness
- Whole of government approach
- Veterans affected by homelessness.

Representative Boschee introduced HCR 3030 with supportive testimony.(#21544)

Dave Flohr, Director of Agency, supportive testimony.(#21384)

Kelly Gorz, Director of High Plains Housing Center, supportive testimony. (#21492)

Representative Frelich moved a DO PASS and to be placed on the consent calendar

Representative Fegley seconded motion

Roll call vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Robin Weisz	Y
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Karen A. Anderson	Y
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y

Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	Y
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Carrie McLeod	Y
Representative Todd Porter	Y
Representative Brandon Prichard	Y
Representative Karen M. Rohr	Y

Motion carries: 14-0-0

Bill carrier: Representative Dobervich

Additional written testimony:

- Terry Hanson, Grand Forks Housing Authority, (#21341)
- David Klein, Great Plains Housing Authority, (#21387)
- Andrea Olson, Ecectutive Director of Community Action Partnership, (#21390)
- Erin Oban, USDA, (#21497)
- Kristen Rubbelke, NASW, (#21552)

Chairman Weisz adjourned the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Phillip Jacobs, Committee Clerk By: Leah Kuball

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HCR 3030: Human Services Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** and **BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3030 was placed on the Tenth order on the calendar.

2023 SENATE INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

HCR 3030

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Industry and Business Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HCR 3030
3/14/2023

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to consider studying homelessness and barriers to housing, including consideration of the effectiveness of the Rent/Help program; the provision of housing financial support; legal assistance programs available to tenants; state, local, or federal educational programs for tenants and landlords regarding rights and responsibilities; month-to-month eviction rates by human service zone area; definitions of homelessness or homeless rates used by government entities; barriers to accessing housing; the manner in which homeless children receive services; historical rates of homelessness; and how a community based approach to homelessness may reduce rates of homelessness.

2:36 PM Chairman D. Larsen called the meeting to order. Members present: Chairman D. Larsen, Vice Chairman Kessel, Senator Klein. Members absent: Senator Boehm.

Discussion Topics:

- Homelessness
- Average income
- Federal grants

2:36 PM David Flohr, Executive Director, North Dakota Housing Finance Agency, testified in favor of HCR 3030. #24323

3:00 PM Kelly Gorz, Associate Director, High Plains Fair Housing Center, testified in favor of HCR 3030. #24980

3:10 PM Representative Josh Boschee, District 44, Fargo, North Dakota introduced HCR 3030 and testified in favor. #24742

Additional written testimony:

David Klein, #23805

Terry Hanson, #24154

Katie Jo Armbrust, #24925

3:21 PM Chairman D. Larsen closed the hearing.

3:23 PM Senator Kessel moved to DO PASS HCR 3030.

Senator Barta seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Senators	Vote
Senator Doug Larsen	Y
Senator Greg Kessel	Y
Senator Jeff Barta	Y
Senator Keith Boehm	A
Senator Jerry Klein	Y

Motion passed. 4-0-1

Senator Barta will carry the bill.

3:25 Chairman D. Larsen adjourned the meeting.

Brenda Cook, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HCR 3030: Industry and Business Committee (Sen. Larsen, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (4 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3030 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This resolution does not affect workforce development.

TESTIMONY

HCR 3030



WRITTEN TESTIMONY PROVIDED TO
ND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
 DURING THE 68th LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
 On March 1, 2023
IN SUPPORT OF
HCR 3030
 REGARDING

**A Concurrent Resolution Directing the Legislative Management to Consider
 Studying Homelessness and Barriers to Housing**

Chairman Weisz
 Vice Chairman Ruby
 Members of the Human Services Committee

I applaud the authors of this legislation for their continued, dedicated, and sincere interest in addressing homelessness and affordable housing for the citizens of North Dakota. I testify today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 3030 so that North Dakota Legislators and the people of North Dakota can more fully understand the meaning of and the extent of homelessness in North Dakota. Homelessness, its causes, and its remedies, is misunderstood by the majority of those who have not faced an insecure housing situation. Homelessness is not just the individual found living under a bridge or in a parking ramp elevator shaft. Homelessness affects individuals, young and old, families with children, and children with no family attachment. **Can you imagine what it would be like to be a seventeen year old with no family and no place to call home.** This is happening in North Dakota, and it is just wrong!!!

More and better knowledge of the extent of homelessness in North Dakota is needed, but let's not wait for this, or any study, to be completed before applying additional resources towards the issue. The need for additional fiscal and behavioral health resources are great. Increased and permanent funding for the Housing Incentive Fund can go a long way towards addressing this need, knowing that at least ten percent (10%) of the fund must be made available to prevent homelessness through the provision of rental assistance, emergency assistance, barrier mitigation, or targeted supportive services designated to prevent homelessness. Funding HIF to \$50 million is not excessive. HB 1014, now before the Senate, is where an increase to the HIF is possible.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of HCR 3030 and Thank You for all you do.

Respectfully submitted,
 Terry Hanson
 Executive Director



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 (701)746-2545(office) (701)787-9437(direct) (701)740-6738(cell)
 (701)746-2548(fax) TDD 711 tnhanson@grandforksgov.com



HCR 3030

Dave Flohr

Executive Director

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

701.328-8060 or dflohr@nd.gov

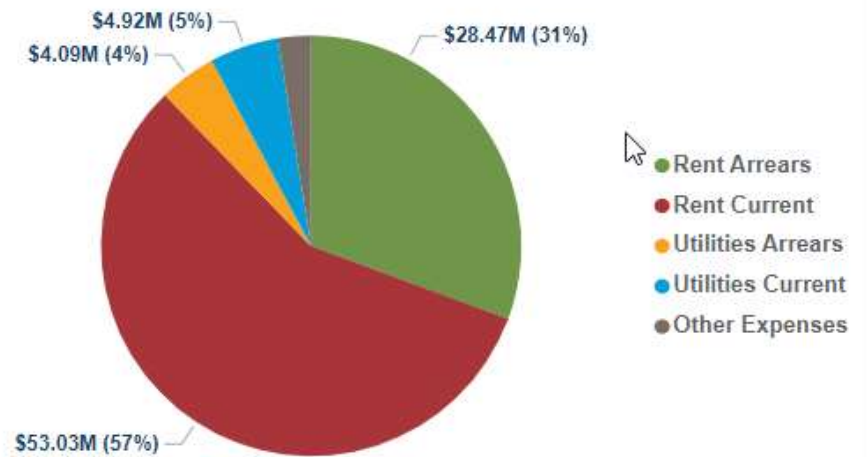
www.ndhfa.org

Context for following slides

- Slides 3-5 are ND Rent Help numbers; Slide 5 shows the percentage of people receiving assistance is concentrated at below 30% of median income
- Slides 6-11 are from the 2022 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment conducted by NDSU Center for Research
- Slide 7: largest segment of population earns less than \$50,000 per yr
- Slide 8: NDSU projections – household income segment growth in extremely low to low income
- Slide 9: Housing cost burdened households by age
- Slide 10: data on homelessness
- Slide 11: Links to Housing Needs Assessment data

ND Rent Help
February 27, 2023

Assistance by Category



Total Assistance Paid

\$93,683,073

Average Assistance per Household per Month

\$733



ND Rent Help
February 27, 2023

Total Households Approved

 **21,364**

Housed at Time
of Application

Homeless at Time
of Application

of Households

15,734

6,177

of people in renter households

38,951

8,551

% of households with children younger than 18

54%

29%

of children younger than age 18

17,715

2,536

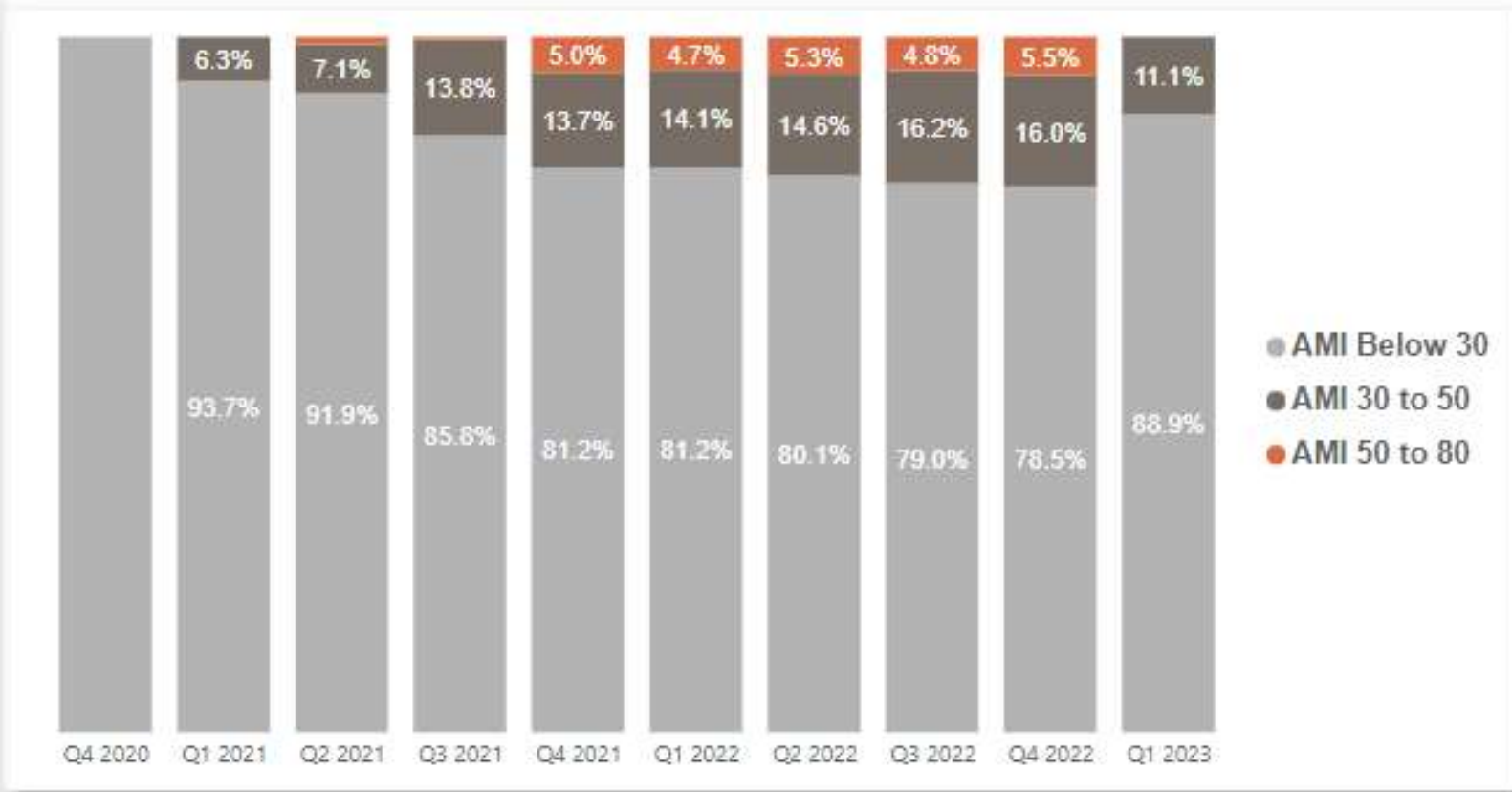
renters age 65 and over

2,168

157

ND Rent Help February 27, 2023

Household Income as reported on application for households who are approved for NDRH assistance



Statewide Housing Needs Assessment

- Income segment growth
- Cost burdened households
- Homelessness

HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota Households by Household Income Level, 2010, 2015, and 2020

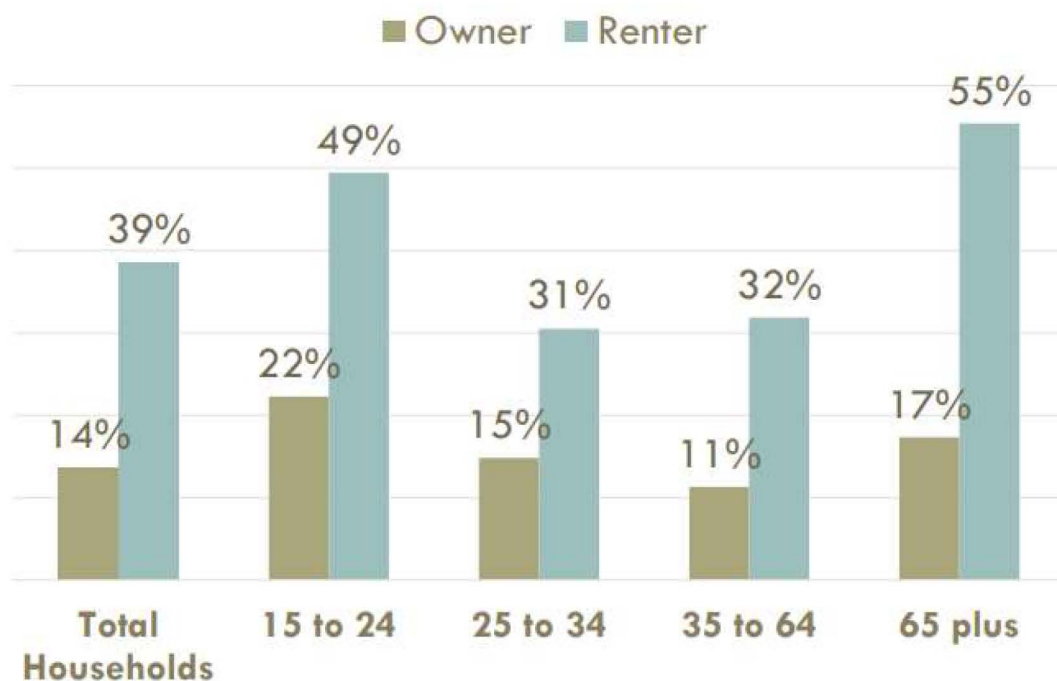


Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2021c)

Household Income

Extremely Low (less than) \$26,070)	6.4%
Very Low (\$26,070-\$43,450)	4.9%
Low (\$43,451-\$69,520)	2.4%
Lower Moderate (\$69,521-99,935)	1.5%
Moderate (\$99,936-\$121,660)	0.3%
Upper (greater than \$121,661)	-0.1%

HOUSING COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS IN NORTH DAKOTA, BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER, 2020



Cost Burdened defined:

Householders spending at least 30% of household income toward housing costs

The youngest and oldest renters are more burdened than middle-aged households

- About half of renters ages 15-24 and ages 65+ were burdened by housing costs in 2020

Homelessness

Minority Populations – disproportionately affected

Youth – over 2,000 school age experienced homelessness in 2022

Aging out of Foster Care – 41% experienced homelessness by age 19

Statewide Housing Needs Assessment

- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Population and Housing Forecast](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Housing Profiles](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Detailed Tables](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Combined Report \(Forecast, Housing Profiles and Detailed Tables\)](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Condensed Version](#)
- [Statewide Housing Needs Assessment Presentation](#) by Dr. Nancy Hodur for the 2022 Statewide Housing Forum

HCR 3030

Dave Flohr

Executive Director

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

701.328-8060 or dflohr@nd.gov

www.ndhfa.org

A large yellow triangle is positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, pointing towards the top right.



Great Plains Housing Authority

Serving Dickey, Eddy, Foster, Logan, Sargent, Stutsman, and Wells Counties

TO: ND Legislators
 From: David Klein, Executive Director
 Date: February 28, 2023
 Re: HCR 3030

Great Plains Housing Authority supports the efforts to have a comprehensive study on homelessness and the barriers to housing. Housing authorities provide HUD rental assistance independently from NDHFA and see direct issues working with clients to provide housing. A study including service providers, housing authorities, law enforcement, veteran services, human service zone offices, domestic violence shelters, and landlords will provide critical information.

There are housing and homeless issues across the state and in each community. The workforce shortage with supportive services, low-to-moderate income rental assistance, participating landlords, affordable housing units, and other services. Housing authorities, Community Action, Human Service Zones, Veterans Services, and others work together to help vulnerable clients. Policy issues such as memorandum of understandings, releases of information, criminal policies create additional barriers. Homeless individuals may not qualify for government benefits or jobs without a stable address.

ND Rent Help shows an enormous need for a rental assistance program to help the moderate-income households outside the limits of HUD rental assistance. HUD Rental Assistance is limited to low income and funds are secured by HUD. The workforce needs help renting across the state.

A study will find the need for North Dakota to have a separate Rental Assistance program. Developers limit where programs are used and limit who is allowed in those properties. Developers and current tools may not help the most vulnerable where they are and may create adverse situations.

The proposed study is a step forward in helping North Dakota identifying crisis points, developing tools to ease homelessness and rent burden, providing new opportunities for service agencies, and sustaining quality of life.

Mailing address: 300 2nd Ave NE – Suite 200, Jamestown, ND 58401

Toll free: 800-340-4537

Phone: 701-252-1098

Fax: 701-252-7735

Web: www.greatplainsha.com

Email: office@greatplainsha.com

Locations: Carrington, Ellendale, Jamestown, New Rockford





February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrea Olson and I'm the Executive Director of Community Action Partnership of North Dakota (CAPND). We are a nonprofit organization representing the collective interests of our members and the low-income population of the state through representation and education for more than 40 years. The services provided by our regional Community Action Agencies serve low-income families, including those who have experienced homelessness.

CAPND fully supports HCR 3030 to study homelessness and barriers to housing across North Dakota. This study would be critical in evaluating the numerous components that adversely impact people experiencing poverty and homelessness in their efforts to have stable, safe, and affordable housing. Utilizing the results of the study could put our state into the realm of developing robust policy that utilizes evidence-based practices for meaningful solutions.

CAPND has been a partner with North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (NDDHHS) on the North Dakota Rent Help Program (NDRH) and can attest to not only its success, but also to its need. Every single month the number of applications to the program grows. To-date, NDRH has provided over \$96M in assistance to families across the state, including over 6,000 who were experiencing homelessness at time of application. In 2022, CAPND provided an average of 80 instances of homeless counseling each month.

Additionally, CAPND administers the statewide Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program; serving Veteran families who are either experiencing homelessness or who are on the verge of homelessness. CAPND provides services to over 300 Veterans each year.

In administering two large statewide programs that involve homelessness and housing, CAPND has seen how the provision of financial assistance, wrap-around supports, and meaningful case management can have a lasting impact. CAPND has also seen the critical involvement of the key people to deploy effective strategies. As you proceed with the potential study, CAPND emphatically supports the idea of involving all parties; service providers, housing authorities, consumers and people experiencing poverty, developers, and all pertinent community stakeholders. They all play a substantial role in moving the needle towards ending homelessness across North Dakota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Olson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrea Olson, MS, CCAP, NCRT
Executive Director
Community Action Partnership of North Dakota

High Plains Fair Housing Center



February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kelly Gorz the Associate Director of High Plains Fair Housing Center. The mission of the High Plains Fair Housing Center is to strengthen communities and to ensure equal access to fair housing in the region through training, education, enforcement and advocacy.

As part of our mission to advocate for North Dakotans experiencing housing discrimination, we operate an intake line. In the past year, we received over 1,000 calls and the majority of the calls are from people who are trying to remain housed and having difficulty navigating the intricacies of the landlord tenant relationship. With nowhere to turn many people call us requesting assistance in understanding their rights and responsibilities under Century Code Chapter 47-16 Leasing of Real Property. Although, this is outside our mission we do listen to people's concerns and try to refer them to agencies that may be able to assist them in remaining housed. Sadly, there are few organizations that can assist with legal support or mediation in housing which ultimately leads to homelessness.

With the unemployment rate so low in North Dakota, housing stability is crucial for the growth and prosperity of our economy.

High Plains supports HCR 3030 to study homelessness and barriers to housing across North Dakota. This study will be able to help practitioners and policy makers understand what are the most important barriers to housing stability. Importantly data from this study can assist lawmakers in making sound policy that can keep people housed. People who have stable housing have better health outcomes and better economic prospects which in the long run will help all of North Dakota.

Thank you,

Kelly Gorz

www.highplainsfhc.org

High Plains Fair Housing Center | info@highplainsfhc.org
PO Box 5222 | Grand Forks, ND 58206 | 701-203-1077

Nothing in this letter is legal advice, for legal advice please see an attorney.



**Rural Development |
North Dakota**

Erin Oban,
State Director

220 East Rosser Ave.
P.O. Box 1737
Bismarck, ND 58502

(701) 530-2037
Erin.Oban@usda.gov

RE: HCR 3030 – Homelessness and Barriers to Housing Study

Chairman Weisz and members of the ND House Human Services Committee,

On behalf of USDA Rural Development, I write to express our agency's desire to engage in any formal studies and collaborative discussions on the important issue of access to housing.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to improve the economic opportunities and quality of life for rural America. Our agency provides financing in the form of grants, loans, and loan guarantees to assist individuals, small businesses, ag producers, non-profits, cooperatives, and communities in reaching their goals. With programs to help fund community facilities, infrastructure for the delivery of water and wastewater processing, electricity, and high-speed internet and telecommunications, small business start-ups and expansion, energy efficiency, and single- and multi-family housing, there are significant opportunities through USDA Rural Development to make positive impacts for our rural residents.

In FY22, USDA Rural Development invested more than \$531,000,000 into North Dakota's smallest towns and tribal communities. While we celebrate the trusted partnerships that led to that tremendous level of investment, our single-family housing programs have too long been underutilized in North Dakota. Considering these housing programs are specifically available to a population of North Dakotans who may otherwise have difficulties obtaining financing to support housing needs, we are very interested in working with others to determine how to more effectively reach that eligible population of rural North Dakotans.

For informational purposes, the following are brief summaries of single-family housing programs available through USDA Rural Development:

- The Single-Family Housing Direct Loan Program is available to low- and very-low income individuals and families in rural communities to obtain financing for the purchase, construction, or improvement of a home, with affordable fixed rate financing and no down payment requirement. Applicants may also be eligible for payment assistance.
- The Single-Family Housing Loan Guarantee Program partners with private lenders to make 100% financed, no-money down home loans to low- and moderate-income borrowers.
- The Single-Family Housing Home Repair Program, providing a loan for up to \$40,000 for 20 years at just 1% interest and/or grants up to \$10,000 (for age 62 and older), assists very-low income individuals in the repair or rehab their rural residence, allowing them to better afford necessary upgrades and updates to remain in their homes more safely and efficiently.

USDA Rural Development offers our collaboration in supporting ways to get and keep low-income rural residents into safe, affordable, accessible homes and to build generational wealth that often first requires homeownership. We stand ready to work alongside all local, state, tribal, and federal partners to better serve North Dakotans on the issue of housing.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin Oban".

Erin Oban
State Director



North Dakota House of Representatives

STATE CAPITOL
600 EAST BOULEVARD
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



Representative Josh Boschee

District 44
517 First Street North
Fargo, ND 58102-4540
jboschee@ndlegis.gov

Minority Leader

COMMITTEES:
Industry, Business and Labor

March 1, 2023

Good morning Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,

For the record, my name is Josh Boschee and I serve as a Representative from District 44, which comprises downtown and north Fargo.

HCR 3030 was introduced to expand the conversation around homelessness, barriers to housing and assistance for renters throughout North Dakota. The House Appropriations Committee Human Resources Division had a great conversation last month as they dug into the work that the ND Housing Finance Agency was doing to manage the Federal grants and supplemental state dollars related to homelessness. Watching our colleagues engage the Agency with curiosity, especially as it related to homeless children, encouraged me to see what more we as the legislature can do to address this issue.

Like many aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state received significant financial resources from the Federal government to assist with addressing housing, whether that was to make sure those that are unhoused had access to housing or those that were renting or owned homes could remain housed. As those funds and programs phase out over the coming years, I believe this provides us an opportunity to review what works and doesn't work so that we can adjust to implement solutions that work for North Dakota.

When I served on the Fargo Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons Board of Directors (now called the FM Coalition to End Homelessness) it always amazed me how large the group was that met monthly to identify issues, implement solutions and coordinate support of our area's homeless population. Once a month, over 50 people would gather in the basement of the library, meaning there were hundreds of others back at shelters and offices still doing the work. While this coalition was working to meet the everyday crises our neighbors and family faced, they were also working to try and address the issues that cause homelessness.

At the state level, the ND Housing Finance Agency, Department of Commerce and Department of Health and Human Services all play an integral role in addressing homelessness and housing providing resources to individuals and community providers. In 2004, Governor Hoeven created through Executive Order the ND Interagency Council on Homelessness composed of state agencies, three mayors, the president of the ND Coalition for Homeless People and a representative from the Governor's office to evaluate resources, educate and provide recommendations to address homelessness throughout the state. You can review their [2021 report here](#). The work of these entities in collaboration with community providers and local governments may be moving the needle on

homelessness and housing, but I believe we as the legislature can provide greater direction and support to their work.

Other states, local governments and the US Department of Veterans Affairs have implemented Housing First strategies (get people housed first so they can work on the other issues impacting their life such as addiction, health and unemployment) and set goals to be at Functional Zero (having temporary and permanent housing available so that anyone that homelessness is rare and brief) as ways to actively address homelessness and housing affordability. Are these strategies North Dakota should explore? What can we learn from those that have worked towards and achieved these goals?

Over the past several bienniums, the legislature in partnership with state and local agencies has done a great job of implementing a whole of government approach at addressing addiction and behavioral health. It is my hope that we can implement a similar approach to housing. HCR 3030 will allow us as legislators to partner with state and Federal agencies, local governments, community providers and those that have experienced housing issues to evaluate what we do well, what we can improve on and what is missing from local or state policy.

Following me will be a couple stakeholders speaking to how a legislative study may be helpful to their work and as you can see there are is testimony provided in LAWS and online.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I ask for you to provide a Do Pass recommendation on HCR 3030 so that we as the policy making and appropriations body have a better understanding of what is being done to address homelessness and housing, so that we be more engaged in implementing solutions that are cost effective and help support a healthier, more prosperous state for all our citizens. Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions.

TESTIMONY on HCR 3030
from the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS—NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
to the
ND House Human Services Committee
March 1, 2023

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee:

The Advocacy Committee of the NASW-ND submits this testimony in support of HCR 3030.

Social workers in North Dakota are often on the front lines of providing support for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Among other services, social workers offer counseling, case management, job search assistance, crisis intervention, and information and referral related to housing, rent assistance, and health care services.

When communities are unable to provide sufficient affordable and accessible housing, and when behavioral health resources are in short supply, social workers see first-hand the impact that homelessness has on child development, family relationships, health, and psychological and emotional well-being.

The profession of social work recognizes that homelessness is one of the grand challenges facing our country and local communities, and the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare has called on policy-makers to:

- expand investment in affordable house and expand access to housing subsidies
- prevent homelessness or ensure its brevity by supporting rapid re-housing and time-limited rental assistance
- ensure that evidence-based psychosocial interventions accompany housing assistance
- develop and evaluate housing-led interventions for specific populations including youth, older people, and veterans.

HCR 3030 will help advance the efforts to ensure that no North Dakotan is without a home. Thank you for your support of this bill.

Testimony written by:

Amy Phillips, MSSW, MDiv, PhD

Vice President, Board of Directors NASW-ND, and member, NASW-ND Advocacy Committee

Testimony submitted by:

Kristin Rubbelke, LSW, MSW, MASJ

Executive Director

NASW-ND

The North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-ND) is a membership association representing social workers in the state of North Dakota. The mission of NASW-ND is to strengthen and protect the practice of social work in North Dakota and to advance sound and equitable social policy. Our position on this bill is solidly grounded in our organization's mission.

https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/EndHomelessness_2Pager.pdf

<https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/end-homelessness/>

I support HCR 3030. I believe the state can help solve affordable housing issues, homelessness, and many other society issues by looking at the major blocks to housing families in North Dakota. Such a study should be comprehensive and involve all parties. A study can give North Dakota a road map and new tools to better understand and solve the crisis.



WRITTEN TESTIMONY PROVIDED TO
ND SENATE
INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE
 DURING THE 68th LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
 On March 14, 2023
IN SUPPORT OF
HCR 3030
 REGARDING
A Concurrent Resolution Directing the Legislative Management to Consider
Studying Homelessness and Barriers to Housing

Chairman Larsen
 Vice Chairman Kessel
 Members of the Industry and Business Committee

I applaud the authors of this legislation for their continued, dedicated, and sincere interest in addressing homelessness and affordable housing for the citizens of North Dakota. I testify today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 3030 so that North Dakota Legislators and the people of North Dakota can more fully understand the meaning of and the extent of homelessness in North Dakota. Homelessness, its causes, and its remedies, is misunderstood by the majority of those who have not faced an insecure housing situation. Homelessness is not just the individual found living under a bridge or in a parking ramp elevator shaft. Homelessness affects individuals, young and old, families with children, and children with no family attachment. **Can you imagine what it would be like to be a seventeen-year-old with no family and no place to call home.** This is happening in North Dakota, and it is just wrong!!!

More and better knowledge of the extent of homelessness in North Dakota is needed, but let's not wait for this, or any study, to be completed before applying additional resources towards the issue. The need for additional fiscal and behavioral health resources are great. Increased and permanent funding for the Housing Incentive Fund can go a long way towards addressing this need, knowing that at least ten percent (10%) of the fund must be made available to prevent homelessness through the provision of rental assistance, emergency assistance, barrier mitigation, or targeted supportive services designated to prevent homelessness. Funding HIF to \$50 million is not excessive. HB 1014 (Section 6.2.), now before the Senate Appropriations Committee, is where an increase to the HIF is possible.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of HCR 3030 and Thank You for all you do.

Respectfully submitted,
 Terry Hanson
 Executive Director



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HCR 3030

Dave Flohr

Executive Director

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

701.328-8060 or dflohr@nd.gov

www.ndhfa.org

ND Rent Help
March 13, 2023

Total Households Approved

22,347

**Housed at Time
of Application**

**Homeless at Time
of Application**

of Households

16,211

6,437

of people in renter households

40,485

8,812

% of households with children younger than 18

52%

30%

of children younger than age 18

18,363

2,618

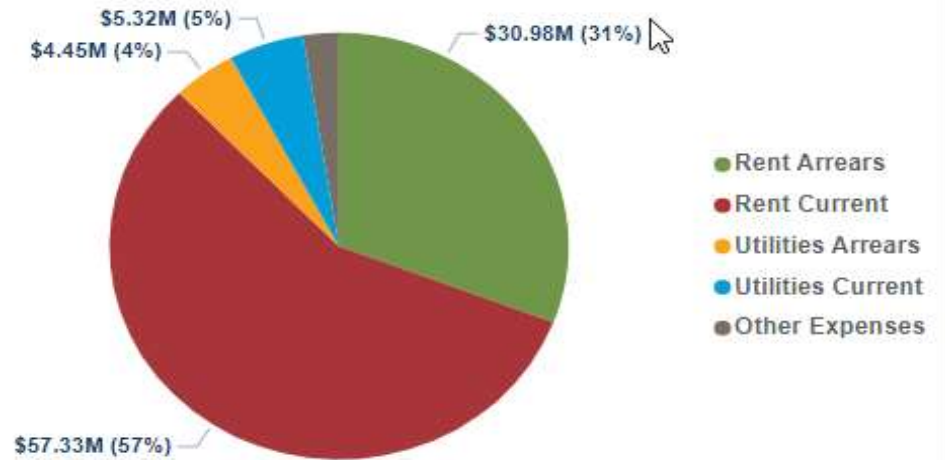
renters age 65 and over

2,281

163

ND Rent Help
March 13, 2023

Assistance by Category



Total Assistance Paid

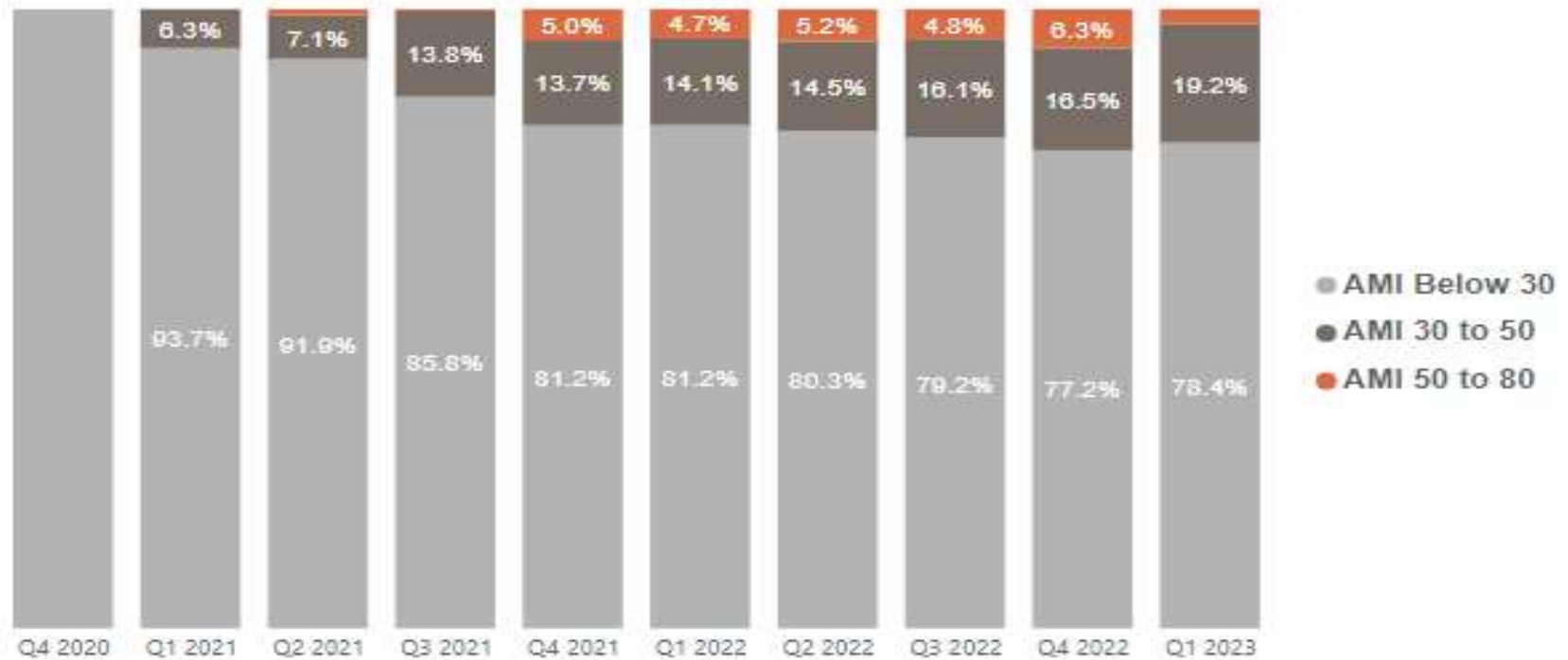
\$102,071,497

Average Assistance per Household per Month

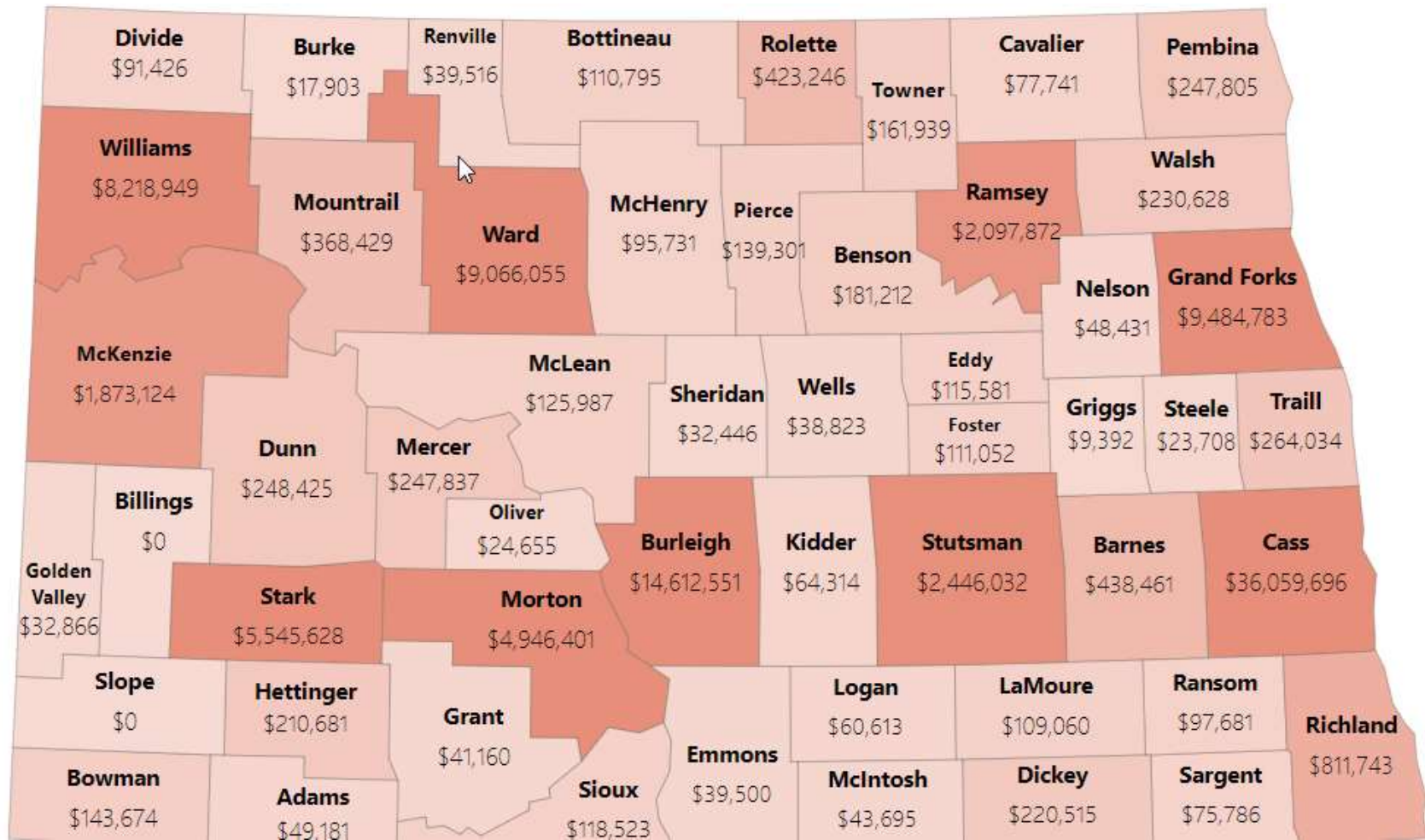
\$737

ND Rent Help March 13, 2023

Household Income as reported on application for households who are approved for NDRH assistance



ND Rent Help March 13, 2023



Statewide Housing Needs Assessment

Income
segment growth

Cost burdened
households

Homelessness

HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota Households by Household Income Level,
2010, 2015, and 2020

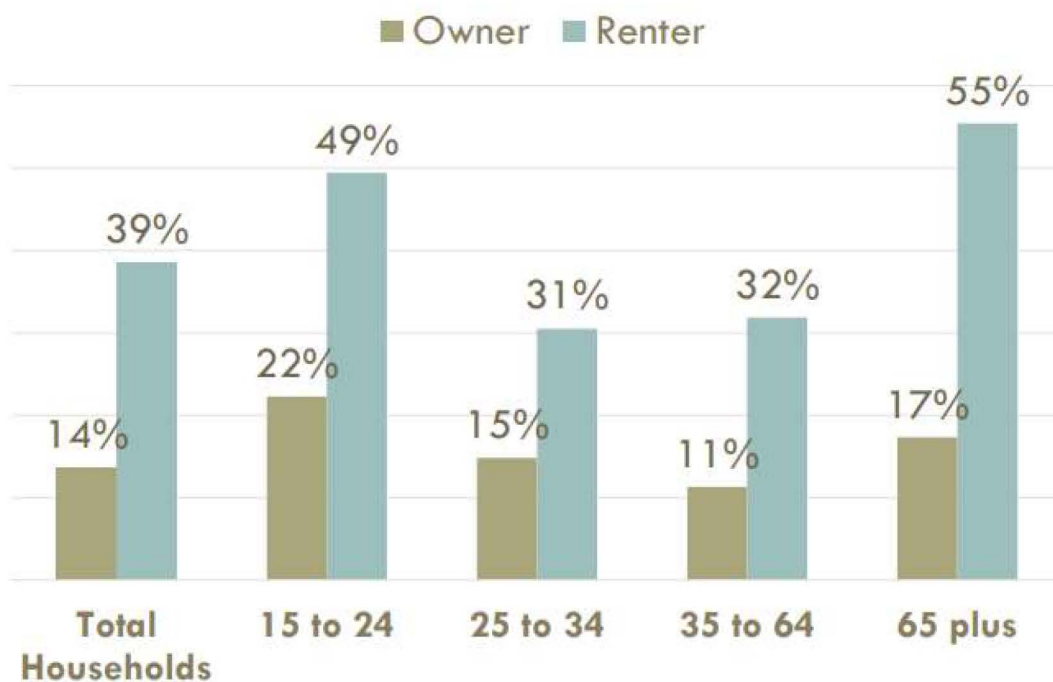


Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2021c)

Household Income

Extremely Low (less than) \$26,070)	6.4%
Very Low (\$26,070-\$43,450)	4.9%
Low (\$43,451-\$69,520)	2.4%
Lower Moderate (\$69,521-99,935)	1.5%
Moderate (\$99,936-\$121,660)	0.3%
Upper (greater than \$121,661)	-0.1%

HOUSING COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS IN NORTH DAKOTA, BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER, 2020



Cost Burdened defined:
Householders spending at least 30% of household income toward housing costs

The youngest and oldest renters are more burdened than middle-aged households

- About half of renters ages 15-24 and ages 65+ were burdened by housing costs in 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2021C)

Homelessness

Minority Populations

Youth – over **2,000**

Aging out of Foster Care

Statewide Housing Needs Assessment

<https://www.ndhfa.org/index.php/publications/>

- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Population and Housing Forecast](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Housing Profiles](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Detailed Tables](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Combined Report \(Forecast, Housing Profiles and Detailed Tables\)](#)
- 2020-2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment – [Condensed Version](#)
- [Statewide Housing Needs Assessment Presentation](#) by Dr. Nancy Hodur for the 2022 Statewide Housing Forum

HCR 3030

Dave Flohr

Executive Director

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

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North Dakota House of Representatives

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Minority Leader

COMMITTEES:
Industry, Business and Labor

March 14, 2023

Good afternoon Chair Larsen and members of the Senate Industry and Business Committee,

For the record, my name is Josh Boschee and I serve as a Representative from District 44, which comprises downtown and north Fargo.

HCR 3030 was introduced to expand the conversation around homelessness, barriers to housing and assistance for renters throughout North Dakota. The House Appropriations Committee Human Resources Division had a great conversation last month as they dug into the work that the ND Housing Finance Agency was doing to manage the Federal grants and supplemental state dollars related to homelessness. Watching our colleagues engage the Agency with curiosity, especially as it related to homeless children, encouraged me to see what more we as the legislature can do to address this issue.

Like many aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state received significant financial resources from the Federal government to assist with addressing housing, whether that was to make sure those that are unhoused had access to housing or those that were renting or owned homes could remain housed. As those funds and programs phase out over the coming years, I believe this provides us an opportunity to review what works and doesn't work so that we can adjust to implement solutions that work for North Dakota.

When I served on the Fargo Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons Board of Directors (now called the FM Coalition to End Homelessness) it always amazed me how large the group was that met monthly to identify issues, implement solutions and coordinate support of our area's homeless population. Once a month, over 50 people would gather in the basement of the library, meaning there were hundreds of others back at shelters and offices still doing the work. While this coalition was working to meet the everyday crises our neighbors and family faced, they were also working to try and address the issues that cause homelessness.

At the state level, the ND Housing Finance Agency, Department of Commerce and Department of Health and Human Services all play an integral role in addressing homelessness and housing providing resources to individuals and community providers. In 2004, Governor Hoeven created through Executive Order the ND Interagency Council on Homelessness composed of state agencies, three mayors, the president of the ND Coalition for Homeless People and a representative from the Governor's office to evaluate resources, educate and provide recommendations to address homelessness throughout the state. You can review their [2021 report here](#). The work of these entities in collaboration with community providers and local governments may be moving the needle on

homelessness and housing, but I believe we as the legislature can provide greater direction and support to their work.

Other states, local governments and the US Department of Veterans Affairs have implemented Housing First strategies (get people housed first so they can work on the other issues impacting their life such as addiction, health and unemployment) and set goals to be at Functional Zero (having temporary and permanent housing available so that anyone that homelessness is rare and brief) as ways to actively address homelessness and housing affordability. Are these strategies North Dakota should explore? What can we learn from those that have worked towards and achieved these goals?

Over the past several bienniums, the legislature in partnership with state and local agencies has done a great job of implementing a whole of government approach at addressing addiction and behavioral health. It is my hope that we can implement a similar approach to housing. HCR 3030 will allow us as legislators to partner with state and Federal agencies, local governments, community providers and those that have experienced housing issues to evaluate what we do well, what we can improve on and what is missing from local or state policy.

Following me will be a couple stakeholders speaking to how a legislative study may be helpful to their work and as you can see there is testimony provided in LAWS and online.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I ask for you to provide a Do Pass recommendation on HCR 3030 so that we as the policy making and appropriations body have a better understanding of what is being done to address homelessness and housing, so that we be more engaged in implementing solutions that are cost effective and help support a healthier, more prosperous state for all our citizens. Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions.

North Dakota Senate Industry and Business Committee
In Support of HCR 3030 - Studying Homelessness, Barriers to Housing, and More

March 14, 2023

Dear Chairman Larsen and members of the Industry and Business Committee,

My name is Katie Jo and I work at the Grand Forks Housing Authority where I've focused on homeless issues over the past 8 years. In 2022, I served as the Board Chair of the North Dakota Continuum of Care, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development Program for our state's concerted efforts on addressing homelessness, which has provided me with a fair share of knowledge regarding the issues at hand and led me to request your support of HCR 3030. This study resolution provides great opportunities for our state to holistically study homelessness - the causes, numbers, types, impacts - and the solutions to addressing the identified issues.

There are a lot of data points that demonstrate the need to address housing and homelessness. With so much discussion surrounding workforce issues and how to address them, there seems to be a key aspect that is largely overlooked - housing. Specifically, *affordable* housing is often less likely to be discussed, or funded, because of the additional investments required to develop and maintain it. HCR 3030 would allow for a comprehensive report to be brought forward with strategic investment recommendations for the next legislative session.

I have seen the effects housing instability has on an individual level, family level, and as a community member. On a personal note, I struggle explaining to my 4.5 year old daughter why someone is begging for money on the street as we go by. I used to think, "they just need to get a job," but I have learned over the years it's not quite that simple. I do not believe in handouts; I believe in investing in solutions that have been proven to work, holding all parties accountable, and treating people with dignity and respect while doing so. Please vote DO PASS on HCR 3030.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Jo Armbrust

High Plains Fair Housing Center



February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Weisz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kelly Gorz the Associate Director of High Plains Fair Housing Center. The mission of the High Plains Fair Housing Center is to strengthen communities and to ensure equal access to fair housing in the region through training, education, enforcement and advocacy.

As part of our mission to advocate for North Dakotans experiencing housing discrimination, we operate an intake line. In the past year, we received over 1,000 calls and the majority of the calls are from people who are trying to remain housed and having difficulty navigating the intricacies of the landlord tenant relationship. With nowhere to turn many people call us requesting assistance in understanding their rights and responsibilities under Century Code Chapter 47-16 Leasing of Real Property. Although, this is outside our mission we do listen to people's concerns and try to refer them to agencies that may be able to assist them in remaining housed. Sadly, there are few organizations that can assist with legal support or mediation in housing which ultimately leads to homelessness.

With the unemployment rate so low in North Dakota, housing stability is crucial for the growth and prosperity of our economy.

High Plains supports HCR 3030 to study homelessness and barriers to housing across North Dakota. This study will be able to help practitioners and policy makers understand what are the most important barriers to housing stability. Importantly data from this study can assist lawmakers in making sound policy that can keep people housed. People who have stable housing have better health outcomes and better economic prospects which in the long run will help all of North Dakota.

Thank you,

Kelly Gorz

www.highplainsfhc.org

High Plains Fair Housing Center | info@highplainsfhc.org
PO Box 5222 | Grand Forks, ND 58206 | 701-203-1077

Nothing in this letter is legal advice, for legal advice please see an attorney.