

## Testimony

Human Services Interim Committee

January 7, 2014

Submitted by Diane Mortenson

Chairman Damschen, members of the Human Services Interim Committee, I am Diane Mortenson, and this is my colleague, Jeri Weiss from Stark County Social Services, and members of the Adult Services Committee, a sub-committee of the North Dakota County Social Services Director's Association.

At the last interim meeting, colleagues of ours talked about several issues relating to Home and Community Based Services, and we'd like to expand on one of them today.

We as case managers that serve the elderly are advocates for elderly and disabled to be independent and reside in their own homes for as long as possible. We are seeing that individuals who cannot afford to pay privately for services do not get them provided soon enough and they have to leave their homes for more expensive care. Our recommendation is to add another level of service funding under SPED (Service Payments to the Elderly and Disabled) by reducing the number of impairments needed to qualify for services. This level of service (we will refer to it as Limited SPED) would allow only an Emergency Response System (ERS), up to 2 hours of homemaker services per week, and minimal case management. These services are key in maintaining a safe living environment for those individuals who might fall and need immediate assistance that if not taken care of in a timely manner could result in more expensive care.

The Adult Service Committee is committed to our relationship with the Department of Human Services in a joint effort to continue to meet the growing need for home based services. I would be glad to answer any question at this time.