

Dear sir or to whom this may concern:

My granddaughter was raised in Grand Forks, North Dakota. I am the grandmother of a 22 year old vulnerable adult who has an IQ of 59, equivalent to a 5th or 6th grader.

and North Dakota Legislative Committee

At the time of her birth, she was born with mental defects, which we not aware of. At the age of 6; my daughter noticed abnormalities in her daughter and started to pursue medical help. The medical help in Grand Forks, ND continued until the age of 12, were my daughter asked to take Marissa to Mayo Clinic at Rochester, MN., and to forward all medical records to the Mayo Clinic.

At the appointment with the Phycatrist at Mayo she stated "Marissa was suffering post tramatic stress, By-Polar and Schizoffective disorder and needed 24/7 care". The Mayo Clinic Phycatrist stated "It is unfortunate that North Dakota has no Mental Health Facilities to aid in Marissa's condition as Marissa needed to be placed in said care to protect her from herself". There was such a facility in Duluth, MN, however as Marissa was a ND resident, it was stated that all facilites in North Dakota had to be exhausted before this could be considered an option. Marissa was thus placed in Dakota Boys Ranch, Bismarck; Minot, Dakota Boys Ranch; Fargo, Boys Ranch; and then to the Grand Forks Ruth Meir's Center where it was hoped that Marissa would recieve the 24/7 supervision she required. Unfortunatley for Marissa, being placed in these facilities, exposed her to other troubled youths, wherein she learned poor behavior. Behavior Marissa would never have learned at home, or would have learned in a facility that actually took care of children with Marissa's mental illness.

She aged out of the system at age 18. At this time my daughter and husband pursued legal ajudication to have Marissa delcared incompetent, as it was felt that she would be vulnerable both legally and financcially as an adult, given her history. The court reviewed and ajudicated Marissa to be an incopasitated adult in need of 24/7 care. Impossible for my daughter and son in law to do themselves alone, as they are working class people.

On behalf of Marissa, an application for SSDI was submitted and granted and she was placed in an assistance-living facility. Unfortunatley this facility did not offer 24/7 supervision and there were no facilities available in North Dakota that could provide this for someone with Marissa's illnesses. As a result, Marissa was allowed to come and go freely.

Because of being a VULNERABLE ADULT, she unfortunatley fell in with drug abusers and persons of criminal intent, wherein she was caught shop lifting and taking drugs in the company of these persons. As a result, Marissa was incarcerated several times, as this behavior was allowed to continue due to lack of proper supervision from the facility she was in. This continued behavior led to Marissa losing her SSDI as well as her place in the facility she was in.

Marissa at this time became homeless and was placed on the streets of Grand Forks, ND as a vulnerable adult. She once again fell in with the wrong sort and became incarcerated, which led to her being placed in a half-way house in Mandan, ND. Once again, this was a facility which did not provide 24/7 supervision, wherein she was allowed to come and go. As a result, Marissa went missing and has not been seen or heard from in since 25th of May. When Marissa went missing, she had no money and only the clothes on her back. At this time, her whereabouts being unkown, no access to her medications, her given vulnerability, where she is easily taken advantage of by others with ill intent, it is not known if she is alive or dead.

All of the aforementioned could have been avoided simply if facilities existed in North Dakota for adults with mental illnesses and vulnerabilities requiring 24/7 supervision, the type of mental illness which Marissa was diagnosed with.

Sincerely,

Teresa Hayes (Mother)
Jason Hayes (Father)
Irene Monson (Grandmother)