

**Testimony on SB 2012  
Senate Appropriations  
Sub Committee on Human Services  
January 17, 2007**

**Jon Larson, NDACF Government Affairs Chair**

Chairman Fisher and members of the committee, my name is Jon Larson. I am the executive Director of Enable, Inc, a licensed service provider for people with developmental disabilities in Bismarck and Mandan. I am also here today to testify on behalf of the North Dakota Association of Community Facilities (NDACF).

I am focusing my testimony today on an OAR contained in the executive budget regarding transitioning people residing at the developmental center to community settings. This is OAR number 4.

We began working with Alex Schweitzer and other representatives of the Department of Human Services prior to the last legislative session and brought to you a plan to get moving again on placing people from the developmental center in Grafton to community settings. We were instructed by the 2005 legislative session to study this process and to get started moving people where and when it was appropriate to do so. \$50,000 was provided to aid in this process.

Alex Schweitzer chaired a committee consisting of developmental center staff, case management staff, central office staff, community provider representatives and representatives from advocacy and consumer groups. That committee met several times and studied the complexities involved in continuing to place people from the developmental center and established the following recommendations.

- 1) Every individual with Developmental Disabilities residing at the Developmental Center and State Hospital will have a placement plan developed in order to place them in an **appropriate** community placement.
- 2) To accomplish this goal there is a need for community capacity building with the following elements in place;

- a) A statewide crisis prevention and response system that is based on a “zero reject” model.
  - b) Increased need for crisis intervention services, to include;
    - 1. Crisis Beds.
    - 2. Out-of-Home Crisis Residential Services.
    - 3. In-Home Technical Assistance.
    - 4. Follow-Along Services after Out-of-Home Crisis Residential Services placement.
    - 5. Training for community professional and direct care staff.
  - c) Increased need for consultation;
    - 1. Behavioral plan consultation and oversight.
    - 2. Consultation for individuals with sexual health issues.
    - 3. Psychiatric and psychological consultation and services.
- 3) Changes in funding and staffing, to include;
- a) Review and amend where appropriate administrative rules that are a disincentive for ISLA placement.
  - b) Increase funding for ISLA placements, including increased administrative reimbursement for existing and new ISLA placements.
  - c) Recruitment and retention of staff, particularly for direct service staff positions, since it is difficult to compete with other service industries and as well as the retail sector.
    - 1. Salary funding increases to get ahead of turnover.
    - 2. Funding for appropriate enhancements to serve increased medical and behavioral needs.
- 4) The transition goal for July 1, 2007 is for a maximum population of 127 individuals residing at the Center.
- 5) The transition goal for July 1, 2009 is for a maximum population of 97 individuals residing at the Center.
- 6) The transition goal for July 1, 2011 is for a maximum of 67 individuals residing at the Center.

Funding for these recommendations is contained in OAR #4. The total cost in this OAR is \$8,146,353 which consists of \$3,698,744 in General Funds and \$4,447,609 in Federal Funds.

I believe it is extremely important that we make this investment in building capacity in community settings so that we can continue our process of placing people from institutional settings into their home communities. I urge your consideration of funding OAR #4.

Thank-you for this opportunity to testify today. I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Jon Larson, Executive Director Enable, Inc.  
North Dakota Association of Community Facilities