



April 22, 2022

RE: True North Recovery Supports House Bill 172: MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES & MEDS

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for your consideration of House Bill 172, the "Crisis Now" legislation. True North Recovery (TNR) supports the passage for H172 which establishes the legal framework for the operation of crisis stabilization and crisis residential centers throughout Alaska.

True North Recovery is currently providing mobile crisis services in Fairbanks Alaska, in partnership with Alaska Behavioral Health. Our peer support professionals are dispatched with a mental health clinician to the individual in crisis to bring resolution and provide an opportunity for intervention at a less intensive level of care. We have had great successes with individuals engaged with our mobile crisis team at time of contact and follow up, yet without adequate community resources and crisis stabilization centers, there is no long-term resolution. It is essential to have 23-hour and short-term stabilization offering a safe, supportive and appropriate behavioral health crisis placement for those who cannot be stabilized by call center clinicians or mobile crisis team response.

Implementation of the full crisis now model means people experiencing a behavioral health crisis get the right care, in the right setting, when they need it, just like we expect individual experiencing a physical health crisis.

True North Recovery is a recovery community organization that provides residential treatment, intensive outpatient, outpatient, multiple recovery residences, case management, reentry services, crisis stabilization and community collaboration in the MatSu Valley and currently expanding into Fairbanks.

We know that same day access and engagement with "no wrong door" to behavioral health services is essential for Alaskans to find and sustain their recovery pathway from substance use and mental health disorders. Too many of our loved ones and community members have been lost to accidental overdose, suicide, and untreated illness. Crisis stabilization and crisis residential centers are a crucial aspect to fill this gap in the behavioral continuum of care.

We urge you to pass House Bill 172. Alaskans depend on it. Thank you for this opportunity to give voice to such a crucial piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Nelson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kara" being more prominent than the last name "Nelson".

Kara Nelson

Director of Development and Public Relations

True North Recovery, Inc.