

**TESTIMONY**  
**SENATE BILL 2267**  
**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE**  
**REPRESENTATIVE DELZER, CHAIRMAN**  
**MARCH 01, 2005**

Chairman Delzer and members of the House Appropriations Human Resources Committee, I am Linda Wright, Director of the Aging Services Division, Department of Human Services. I appear before you today to provide information regarding the Senior Citizens Mill Levy/Mill Levy Match Program.

The Senior Citizens Mill Levy was enacted in 1971 and is included in Section 57-15-56 of the North Dakota Century Code. The state law currently allows counties or cities to authorize up to 2 mills for the purpose of supporting programs and services for older persons. In addition, the law requires the Department of Human Services to provide matching funds for the amounts levied by counties and cities. The match is based on the availability of funds appropriated by the Legislature. The original intent of the Mill Levy Match was to provide a dollar for dollar match of the county or city levy. This was achieved only in the first year of the matching program. Please refer to the attached fact sheet (Attachment A) for additional information.

In the current biennium, the mill levy match budget totals \$1,662,945. The same amount is included in the Department of Human Services budget for the 2005-2007 biennium. Based on the 2003 taxable valuations, this equates to a match of 52.8 cents on the dollar. Attachment B entitled "County Assessment Value and Mill for Senior Citizens Tax Year 2003" details the dollar value of the mill levy, by county and city, and the amount of

matching funds distributed to each. Mill Levy Match funds are distributed once a year by the Department. Based on the 2004 taxable valuations, the match equates to 46.15 cents on the dollar (see Attachment C).

The Senate added \$500,000 to the mill levy match in Senate Bill 2267. Based on 2004 taxable valuations, this would equate to 60.03 cents match on the dollar (see Attachment D).

In order to qualify to receive mill levy funding at the local level, certain requirements need to be met. The recipient agency needs to be incorporated as a not for profit in North Dakota, have a contract with the taxing authority (or their contracting authority), and have filed an annual report of services and expenses generated from the mill levy.

In Fiscal Year 2004, Mill Levy Matching funds assisted with the purchase of 548,958 home delivered meals, 863,680 congregate meals, 138,925 transportation services, 171,244 health services, 133,701 outreach services and 30,594 other services. In addition to helping fund services for older persons, the mill levy match dollars are also used as matching funds for the Older Americans Act federal funds, and are used to help maintain senior citizens centers in communities across the state.

The Aging Services Division is responsible for administration and disbursement of the senior citizen's mill levy match funds. The Regional Aging Services Program Administrator at each of the Regional Human Services Centers is responsible for providing technical assistance to county or city auditors, commissioners, or the contracted agency and to perform program audits as needed.

The Senior Citizen's Mill Levy/Mill Levy Match funds play a very important role in providing services for older persons which allow them to remain in

**their own homes and communities, in the least restrictive environment, for as long as possible.**

**I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.**