



January 31, 2023

Rep. Jessica Hanson
421 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Rep. Hanson:

ARRM is a statewide trade association of over 200 provider organizations, businesses and advocates dedicated to leading in the advancement of Home and Community-Based Services that support people with disabilities. ARRM is a founding member of the Best Life Alliance, a statewide coalition made up of more than 130 provider organizations, people with disabilities, families, and supporters. Together, we are writing to thank you for authoring HF613 which would allow junior and senior high school students to earn elective credits by working in targeted healthcare fields that are experiencing a severe workforce crisis.

Our member organizations employ a large workforce but currently our members have an average of 30% of their open positions going unfilled and an abysmal 65% turnover rate year after year.

HF613 aims to help with our workforce crisis and is modeled after a program Washington State launched last year that allows students to earn up to two elective credits per year and a total of four credits over their junior and senior years by working in long term care, home & community-based services, hospital and clinic systems. The reason we are limiting this program to healthcare is simple, we are in a workforce crisis that is impacting the quality of care of elderly and disabled Minnesotans and backing up hospitals with post-acute patients that they are unable to discharge to a more appropriate setting.

We compete with many other industries such as retail, fast food, and other hospitality industries but those employers can offer higher wages by simply increasing prices. We are not able to do that since our rates are set by the state. We believe that a program that's outlined in HF613 will incentivize high school youth to think about joining our workforce because not only will they receive a paycheck, but they also will learn elective credits towards graduation with real world experience. This program will also provide relevant learning experiences in traditional healthcare settings and could provide a career pathway.

We know this will not solve the workforce crisis but is a tool for our industries to recruit an untapped workforce with a new incentive. Again, thank you for authoring HF612. If you have any questions please reach out to Sara Grafstrom with ARRM at sgrafstrom@arrm.org.

Sincerely,

Sue Schettle
Chief Executive Officer, ARRM