



# MACSSA

Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators

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February 23, 2022

Chair Jennifer Schultz  
Human Services Finance and Policy Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives

RE: [HF1432](#) (Frederick) Vulnerable adult protection provisions modified.

Dear Chair Schultz and the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

The Minnesota Association for County Social Service Administrator's (MACSSA) has been tracking HF1432 and SF2317, which addresses revisions to the Vulnerable Adult Act. MACSSA submitted a letter of support of this bill in 2021 and our membership has passed a [legislative position](#) supporting this legislation (available at [macssa.org](#)). MACSSA supports the language changes in this legislation and the initial recommendations developed from stakeholder groups working as part of the VA redesign team. Some of the key factors in this legislation are as follows:

- Revising language to incorporate the 2012 legislation that put in place a state centralized system for reporting suspected vulnerable adult maltreatment
- Aligns information collected by reporters to support lead investigative agencies in making intake and screening decisions and assessing immediate safety concerns for vulnerable adults
- Requires county agencies to make available to the public their specific criteria for prioritizing maltreatment reports that are “screened in”
- Provides authority, consistent with that of child protection, for adult protective services to gather information during intake to make decisions on which reports should be “screened in”
- Prohibits family members or guardians from acting on behalf of the vulnerable adult when requesting an administrative appeal hearing of their own substantiation of maltreatment
- Requires lead investigative agencies to follow consistent investigation protocols regarding interviews
- Protects vulnerable adults by allowing Adult Protective Services to share data to engage informal supports, like family and friends, to help the vulnerable adult and to make culturally responsive referrals
- Expands authority to add organizations with relevant expertise as members of the county multidisciplinary adult protection team
- Expands the function of the multidisciplinary team

- Establishes one standard for abuse of all vulnerable adults, regardless of diagnosis, or participation in licensed services.
- Modifies the definition of a caregiver to be consistent with state policy to support unpaid caregivers by eliminating presumption of responsibility for neglect of another adult family member based on a family relationship
- Creates separate definitions for caregiver neglect and "self-neglect" for when the vulnerable adult is not meeting their own essential health and safety needs

We believe these changes will provide more authority and consistent guidance to Adult Protective Services across the State. The recommendations are intended to provide more support for vulnerable adults and transparency in the process. MACSSA would see this as the first step in making needed policy revisions to the Vulnerable Adult Act. We are interested in additional work being done by the VA redesign team to add an assessment response to the Adult Protective system sometime in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our support of these legislative bills

Sincerely,



Matt Freeman  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators

Cc: Nicole Stockert, Director of Legislative and External Affairs – DHS Continuing Care for Older Adults