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Bringing Possibilities to Life MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN



Volunteers of America®

March 28, 2023

To: House Human Services Finance and Policy Committee
Re: HF 2847 - Human Services Omnibus Bill

Dear Chair Noor and members of the Human Services Committee,

Our organizations are thankful for your ongoing efforts to build a human services budget that will promote the health and well-being of all Minnesotans. We are grateful for your leadership as you make difficult decisions about this final budget as it will have immediate and long-term impacts on our communities.

We write to you today regarding one provision in HF 2847 - Human Services Omnibus Bill that is of shared interest amongst our organizations: **Life Sharing Benefit**. Life Sharing is a relationship-based living arrangement that carefully matches a person with a disability with an individual or family who opens their home and shares their experience with the person they support. Life Sharing is a proven model, and research shows that by living with a family, a person with disabilities has the opportunity to participate in all desired aspects of family and community life.

We applaud the promotion of this innovative, person-centered service model that supports independent living and has the potential to mitigate the impact of the workforce crisis on people with disabilities. However, we have concerns about the proposed rates for Life Sharing. **It is our recommendation to strengthen the reimbursement model for life sharing providers and life sharing agencies in consultation with providers, people with disabilities, advocacy organizations, and lead agencies.**

We are grateful for the shared goal to promote and incentivize the use of this innovative, person-centered service model for people with disabilities. We are deeply committed to removing barriers to accessing this service and building continued sustainability for individuals and providers.

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Erin Sutton, LSS' Senior Director of Advocacy (erin.sutton@lssmn.org). Thank you for your support to ensure Minnesotans with disabilities maintain access to high quality, sustainable services.

Sincerely,

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Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

MNCCD
The Arc Minnesota
Volunteers of America – Minnesota