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March 28, 2023

Dear members of the House Workforce Development Policy and Finance Committee:

I am writing in support of the additional funding for IPS services in the Workforce Omnibus Bill. We are grateful that additional funding has been included for IPS in this bill, however it is critical that this funding continue after this biennium. Otherwise, we will again be facing a 27% cut in services two years from now. The current bill does not add increased funding to the base appropriation.

Rise is a nonprofit organization providing services to Minnesotans with disabilities and mental illness. We serve over 2,500 people per year from twenty-six locations. We have four IPS projects in the Twin Cities Metro area and three IPS projects in Central Minnesota providing supports to people across eleven counties total. IPS services are critical to the people served by Rise – without these services, employment wouldn't even be possible for many of them.

Stable funding for these services is critical. Stable funding allows us to plan for services well into the future and assures our staff that their jobs will continue to exist. Lack of stable funding leads to increased turnover in these important staff positions, which will further worsen a staffing crisis we are already dealing with in social services.

As stated above, this legislation is necessary to continue the existing IPS projects in the state. Without it, 350 individuals lose access to services. Not only does this funding preserve existing services, but it will also allow the program to serve an additional 325 Minnesotans each year – which is still only a fraction of the demand that exists in our state.

Rise enthusiastically supports increased funding for IPS services and asks that you consider adding this increased funding to the base appropriation.

Thank you for your support and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lynn Noren'.

Lynn Noren  
President & CEO