

March 25, 2024

Re: HF 3419



Dear Chair Noor and Human Services Finance Committee Members,

The Arc Minnesota strongly supports HF 3419, which makes no-cost policy improvements to the Medical Assistance for Employed People with Disabilities (MA-EPD) program.

Founded by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota is a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization that promotes and protects the human rights of individuals with IDD, supporting them and their families in a lifetime of full inclusion and participation in their communities. We are a chapter of The Arc of the United States, the largest national community-based organization advocating for people with IDD and their families.

By ending the termination of benefits due to nonpayment, HF 3419 would make transformational changes that would align our policies with Minnesota's values and directly benefit working Minnesotans with disabilities. For over 20 years, the MA-EPD program has provided an opportunity for Minnesotans with disabilities to work while accessing critical services and supports through MA. While this program was created to boost employment for people with disabilities, the premiums and administrative burdens are a significant barrier to employment and keep people with disabilities living in poverty. Many accessing the program face financial distress as they are under a constant threat of losing their safety net supports.

The Arc Minnesota encourages the committee to pass HF 3419 to let people with disabilities get beyond just surviving and move on to thriving. We will all benefit from their prosperity.

We are grateful Representative Hicks is introducing this bill and excited to continue dialogue with her and other key decision-makers around additional policy improvements to alleviate the administrative and bureaucratic barriers to this program

Sincerely,

Tina Rucci

*Public Policy Director, The Arc Minnesota*