

March 4, 2024

Re: The Arc Minnesota Letter of Support, HF 3907



Chair Noor and members of the Human Services Finance Committee,

On behalf of The Arc Minnesota, we write in support of HF 3907, the Own Home Service Provider Capacity Building Grant bill carried by Rep. Virnig and championed by ARRM.

Founded by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota is a statewide nonprofit organization that promotes and protects the human rights of people who have IDD, supporting them and their families in a lifetime of inclusion and participation in their communities. We believe people who have disabilities are inherently strong, powerful, capable, and resilient.

The Arc Minnesota works with individuals with disabilities to find safe, accessible and affordable housing in their communities. We help people who want to leave congregate settings and find a home of their own. In this process, we see firsthand how challenging it can be to find housing as well the right supports that help keep people remain stable in their housing long-term.

The grants established in HF 3907 would increase options for those leaving congregate settings, support providers as they transition to more individualized service models, and advance the policy direction of the state.

Under 256B.4905, Subd.7, the Informed Choice in Community Living Policy was created to ensure that there is an informed decision making process for individuals to determine if they want to live outside of provider-controlled settings.

The independent living first implementation for disability waiver services, established under 256B.4905, Subd. 8, supports the presumption that people with disabilities want to live independently, in a non-provider controlled setting.

Under the Minnesota Olmstead Housing Vision Statement, "People with disabilities will choose where they live, with whom, and in what type of housing. They can choose to have a lease or own their own home and live in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Supports and services will allow sufficient flexibility to support individuals' choices on where they live and how they engage in their communities."

The grants established in HF 3907 would provide additional funding for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) providers by:

- (1) enhancing resources and staffing to support people and families in understanding housing options;
- (2) providing housing expenses related to moving an individual into their own home;
- (3) implementing and testing innovative approaches to better support people with disabilities and their families in living in their own homes;
- (4) rewarding providers financially who have assisted individuals in moving out of congregate settings into their own home

The Arc Minnesota is grateful to Rep. Virnig for introducing this bill, and graciously ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Tina Rucci, Public Policy Director

Gene Martinez, Legislative Advocacy Coordinator

The Arc Minnesota