



April 18, 2024

To: House Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee

Re: HF 5299 – House Higher Education Supplemental Budget Bill

Dear Chair Pelowski and Vice Chair Wolgamott and Committee Members,

On behalf of the ALS Association, I am writing in support of Rep. Pelowski's inclusion of \$15 million dollars reappropriated for the David J. Tomassoni ALS Research Grant Program and of the clarifying language to the grant program included in the Senate's Higher Education Omnibus Bill. The ALS Association wishes to thank Rep. Pelowski for his continued commitment to the ALS community.

Despite significant progress in understanding Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) over the past few decades, breakthrough treatments remain elusive and people living with ALS urgently need more effective treatments than what is available today. Continued investment in research stimulates drug discovery and helps to increase clinical trial access and efficacy. As we gain a greater understanding of the underlying factors that lead to the development of ALS, research will allow us to leverage genetic testing and counseling to prevent ALS.

The David J. Tomassoni ALS Research Grant Program, named after the late Minnesota Senator, provides funding for research contributing to the prevention, functional improvement, and curative efforts for people with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). To date, the Tomassoni ALS Research Grant has awarded \$4 million to 5 grantees. Research areas include brain and cervical cord imaging as a biomarker, identification of protective factors for spinal motor neurons and biorepository to support ALS research in Minnesota. The language included in SF 5326 will ensure that organizations, institutions, and individuals doing this important research will meet the qualifications of the grant program.

People living with ALS and their families deserve hope. By continuing the commitment to ALS research, we can improve the quality of life and help people live longer, prevent or delay the harms of ALS, and ultimately find a cure.

Thank you for your support of ALS research in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Sarah Sanchez  
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The ALS Association  
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