



MN Alliance for Ethical Healthcare
Ensuring real care throughout life's journey

May 6, 2021

Dear members of the HF2128 Health and Human Services conference committee:

The Minnesota Alliance for Ethical Healthcare is a coalition of 60 organizations including health care providers, disability advocates, mental health experts, faith communities, and veterans' organizations. We are committed to ensuring better healthcare throughout life's journey, and we advocate for compassionate alternatives to the legalization of assisted suicide.

The Alliance supports overall policy changes being considered by the House and Senate that allow for the continued flexibility to deliver quality services to individuals with disabilities. We support the innovations demonstrated by disability providers during the COVID-19 pandemic and encourage efforts to codify some of the lessons learned during this time that balance quality care and efficiencies.

Therefore, the Alliance urges the House and Senate to support personal care assistants (PCAs). Since PCAs are critical to delivering essential care, the Alliance encourages the state to support the recruitment, retention, and development of these professionals. As the pandemic has demonstrated, PCAs have been essential to maintaining a high quality of life for at-risk and vulnerable individuals.

Additionally, while not included in either the House or Senate proposal, we respectfully ask that you consider a bipartisan funding proposal for the Palliative Care Advisory Council, as proposed by SF2400/HF2517 (Housley/Reyer), in your final conference committee report.

As background, in 2017, the Legislature created the Palliative Care Advisory Council (PCAC) within the MN Department of Health. The PCAC consists of a variety of professionals with experience in palliative care that have been tasked with analyzing barriers to accessing this care. Palliative care is incredibly important to providing the physical and emotional comfort to patients facing a serious disease or terminal illness. It has proven to reduce healthcare costs, aid symptom management, and improve patient and family satisfaction. Palliative care is also incredibly valuable for families, who may otherwise struggle to gather the information necessary to make difficult decisions on end-of-life care. The PCAC has done critical work but unfortunately, it has been without state funding since 2017.

We encourage your support of a modest appropriation of \$88,000 (FY22-23). Full funding would allow the Council to fulfill its purpose to make assessments of the availability of palliative care in Minnesota, analyze barriers to greater access to palliative care, and recommend legislative action to improve the access and use of palliative care. We urge conferees to consider this small, but critical funding during deliberations over the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

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Alliance Partners

- AALFA Family Clinic
- American Academy of Medical Ethics
- American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)
- Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)
- Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)
- Benedictine Health System
- Betsy's Team
- Catholic Eldercare
- Catholic Health Association of Minnesota
- Center for Bioethics and Culture
- Christian Medical and Dental Association
- Curatio Apostolate of Catholic Healthcare Professionals
- Democrats for Life
- Diocese of Winona Guild of the Catholic Medical Association (Rochester)
- Disability Justice Network
- Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
- Franciscan Brothers of Peace
- Gianna Homes
- Healthcare Advocacy Leadership Organization (HALO)
- Hospice Patients Alliance
- Human Life Alliance
- Islamic Center of Minnesota
- Jewish War Veterans
- Knights of Columbus Minnesota State Council
- Life Legal Minnesota
- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Minnesota North District
- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Minnesota South District
- Lutherans for Life
- Minnesota Catholic Conference
- Minnesota Family Council
- Minnesota Rural Health Association
- Muslim American Society
- National Council on Independent Living
- North Star Law & Policy Center
- Not Dead Yet
- Order of Malta
- Our Family Encouter
- Our Lady of Peace Hospice & Home Care
- Paralyzed Veterans of America, Minnesota Chapter
- Patients Rights Action Fund
- Prenatal Partners for Life
- Pro-life Healthcare Alliance
- Saint Paul and Minneapolis Guild of the Catholic Medical Association
- St. Joseph Business Guild
- St. Raphael Guild of the Catholic Medical Association (Duluth)
- Students for Human Life at the University of Minnesota
- The Arc Minnesota
- The Heart and Mind Connection
- The Lutheran Home Association
- University of Saint Thomas ProLife Center

Learn more at EthicalCareMN.org

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