

# ST PAUL

## AREA CHAMBER

401 N Robert Street, Suite 150  
St. Paul, MN 55101

MAKING CONNECTIONS THAT COUNT

May 2, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund  
2107 Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Tina Liebling  
477 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund, Chair Liebling, and Conference Committee Members:

On behalf of the 1,700+ members and affiliates of the St. Paul Area Chamber, who together represent more than 3 million employees and their families, thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Health and Human Services Omnibus (S.F. 2955).

Addressing the benefits cliff is one of the St. Paul Area Chamber's top advocacy priorities of 2023. For low-wage workers seeking advancement, the realities of public assistance policies are often an inhibitor to success. Workers face a benefits cliff when they receive public assistance, earn a raise, and then discover that they now make too much to receive their benefits, but the pay increase is not enough to make up the difference of lost benefits.


While some may not immediately recognize this as a business issue, it absolutely is. Businesses want to retain and advance talented employees, especially in this tight labor market. When taking on a promotion would cause a worker a net loss in overall resources to support their family, it negatively impacts the employee's professional development as well as the employer's operations.

Specifically, we are supportive of the following provisions contained in both the House and Senate bills:

- Capping at 30% the amount of "unearned income" an individual must pay towards their Housing Support costs.
- Changing MN Family Investment Program income reporting requirements from monthly to every six months.
- Providing for one year of medical assistance eligibility for children under 21, once deemed eligible for the program, and eligibility up to age six for those children under six.

We appreciate the efforts of both the House and Senate to address the benefits cliff in this budget.

Respectfully,



B Kyle  
President & CEO  
St. Paul Area Chamber

