



March 2, 2021

Dear Chair Schultz and Members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

The Minnesota First Provider Alliance (the "Provider Alliance") is a trade association of personal care assistance ("PCA") agencies and waiver service providers. The PCA program is a critical service that assists over 40,000 Minnesotans in their home and community. The PCA program is vital to ensuring that Minnesotans with disabilities and older adults can safely remain in their homes and avoid the need for more costly services.

We want to express our support of House File 1159, a bill that seeks to extend temporary personal care assistance compensation for services provided by parents of minors and spouses until Community First Services and Supports is fully implemented. We also want to thank Representative Acomb for authoring this important legislation.

The PCA program has been facing a workforce crisis for many years, and the COVID 19 pandemic has put even more pressure on an already fragile workforce. Many individuals who receive PCA services have underlying health conditions that make them more vulnerable to serious health issues if they were to contract COVID-19. By allowing parents of minors and spouses to be paid to provide care for their loved one, they can reduce the number of people coming into their home, reducing the risk of exposure. It also helps with the workforce crisis.

We appreciated the temporary allowance that paid parents of minors and spouses for nine weeks, from December 1, 2020 to February 7, 2021 that passed during the 5th special session. While this was only temporary, now is the time to make it permanent. We have seen the benefit of this provision for families and people who access PCA services and ask that you support HF 1159. Thank you for your consideration of our request and to Representative Acomb for authoring this bill.

Sincerely,

Dena Belisle, President/Board Chair
Minnesota First Provider Alliance

Julie Lux and Lisa Zaspel, Policy Co-Chairs
Minnesota First Provider Alliance