

## A statewide approach to disability as part of healthy aging

**Date:** May 12, 2025

**To:** **Conference Committee on SF3045/HF2783**

**Omnibus State and Local Government and Elections policy and appropriations**

Sen. Tou Xiong, Chair

Rep. Ginny Klevorn, Co-chair

Sen. Jim Carlson

Rep. Jim Nash, Co-chair

Sen. Erin Maye Quade

Rep. Mike Freiberg

Sen. Bonnie Westlin

Rep. Pam Altendorf

Sen. Andrew Lang

**From:** Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing

### Please support the Healthy Aging Subcabinet (as amended)

The Commission urges conferees to support the House provisions for establishing a Health Aging Subcabinet, with a forthcoming amendment to include the concept of “adapting to” disability as part of community strategies contributing to healthy aging.

We view disability, especially those impacting hearing and vision, as a natural part of the aging process and believe adaptability is a strength that benefits any community. During the Commission’s work, we frequently encounter policy that omits disability, or at best, treats it as an afterthought. Because disability is often acquired near or past retirement age, the overwhelming majority of working-age adults are able-bodied. The end result is policy made and implemented by people who have not yet experienced disabilities.

This underrepresentation of disability among decisionmakers makes it essential that there be a statewide authority on healthy aging with disability, to guide policymakers across all agencies who do not have this lived experience.

Please support the Healthy Aging Subcabinet, which will empower Minnesotans to adapt to disability as a natural part of healthy aging.

Signed,



Alicia Lane, Government Relations Director