



COUNCIL ON DISABILITY

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Honorable Chair Representative Mohamud Noor
House Human Services Finance Committee
RE: HF 3445 – Representative Hicks
March 26th, 2024

Chair Noor and members of the House Human Services Finance Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Disability would like to express our unequivocal support for HF 3445 and emphasize the critical need for Minnesota's state agencies to prioritize accessibility and clarity in disability services. As a state agency deeply invested in disability rights advocacy, the Minnesota Council on Disability witnesses the struggles Minnesotans with disabilities face when trying to access essential services within our state.

Navigating the maze of disability services can feel like an insurmountable challenge for many individuals and families. The complexity of the process often leads to confusion, frustration, and unnecessary delays in receiving crucial services and support. It's imperative that Minnesota's state government takes responsibility for ensuring that these services are accessible and easily understood by all who need them.

Accessibility encompasses more than physical accommodations; it also includes the ease with which individuals can navigate the bureaucratic processes involved in accessing services. Many individuals with disabilities face barriers such as inaccessible websites, complex forms, and lack of clear communication about available services. These barriers not only hinder access but also perpetuate inequality and exclusion.

As stewards of public resources, Minnesota state agencies have a duty to streamline and simplify the application process for disability services. This includes investing in accessible online platforms, providing plain language guidance on eligibility criteria and available services, and offering assistance throughout the application process. It not enough to educate the public on how to access these services, but to proactively audit these processes and ask ourselves: "How can we reduce bureaucratic red tape and ensure that everyone who qualifies for services, actually receives them?"

In conclusion, we urge the committee to support HF 3445 and recognize the responsibility of Minnesota's state government in making disability services more accessible and understandable. By prioritizing accessibility and clarity, we can create a more inclusive and equitable system that upholds the rights and dignity of all individuals with disabilities in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trevor Turner".

Trevor Turner
Public Policy Director
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Dively".

David Dively
Executive Director
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