March 21, 2023

Dear Members of the Human Services Finance Committee:

The Alzheimer's Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting people living with Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia. We are writing today to share our support for HF 1596. This important legislation funds an actuarial study on the delivery of Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). With this study in place, PACE programs can begin providing services in Minnesota.

For seniors with complex medical needs, it can be very challenging to navigate a fragmented elder care system. In many cases, seniors receive a patchwork of services until they experience a medical crisis and it is necessary to seek more intensive care at a hospital or nursing home. PACE is a proven, interdisciplinary service that breaks this cycle and empowers seniors beginning at age 55 to live in the community. Despite the fact that all eligible PACE recipients qualify for a Nursing Home level of care, 95% choose to live in their home. This is possible because PACE offers a coordinated, team-based approach to elder care including medication management, transportation, and meals. This service is particularly impactful for seniors with complex co-occurring medical conditions.

As the legislature reckons with an aging population and an overwhelmed elder care system, it is essential that we remain focused on the upstream interventions that support people in the community before more expensive and intensive treatment becomes necessary. With limited ongoing resources and a surplus of one-time funding, now is the time to fund the PACE actuarial study so Minnesotans can benefit from this proven service.

Sincerely,

Sam Smith
State Affairs Manager
Alzheimer's Association