

 July 10, 2020

Governor Walz Lt Governor Flanagan

Senate Majority Leader Gazelka Speaker of the House Hortman

Senate Minority Leader Kent House Majority Leader Winkler

DHS Commissioner Harpstead House Minority Leader Daudt

Senate HHS Chair Benson House HHS Chair Liebling

Senate HHS Vice Chair Jensen House HHS Vice Chair Mann

Senate HHS Ranking Minority Member Marty House HHS Republican Lead Schomacker

Dear State Leaders,

We are writing to you as the second special session of the Minnesota Legislature begins, **to request that you allocate emergency funding to avoid the loss of meaningful Employment and Life Enrichment services for over 26,000 Minnesotans with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.**

The Covid-19 crisis stopped almost all of the services provided to this population, and there is no end in sight for the time being. These service providers only get paid for services provided, on a day-to-day basis. **These service providers need one-time emergency funds to cover at least their fixed costs, or they will not be in business when the time comes that services for people with disabilities will resume.**

Several attempts have been made to secure emergency funding over the last few months, including bills and Executive Orders. The Department of Human Services has been working closely with service provider groups to provide some flexibility and guidance in terms of resuming some services. **But so far, nothing has happened that provides real relief to the coverage of fixed costs.**  As parents, family members and friends of people with disabilities, we are disappointed with this situation, especially considering the fact that 35+ states have found a way to provide temporary emergency financial support to their service providers outside of the normal reimbursement arrangements.

Minnesota has a long tradition of being a leader in terms of supporting people with disabilities and now we are far away from that tradition**. Please put Minnesota back into a leadership position and find a way to support emergency funding for 26,000+ Minnesotans with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who depend on and are entitled to Employment and Life Enrichment service providers.**

***Minnesota Families and Advocates Coalition*** *– a non-profit organization providing support and advocacy for parents, family members and friends of people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.* MNFACgroup@gmail.com