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January 31, 2023

Representative Noor and Members of the Human Services Finance Committee  
379 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairman Noor and Members of the Human Services Finance Committee,

On behalf of St. David's Center's Direct Support Professionals and the people they support and their families, we urge you to vote for the legislation that will update the Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS) for Individualized Home Supports (IHS) with and without Training and remove Respite from that system to a market rate.

We employ an aging workforce of parents, guardians and relative staff that are exhausted and desperate for respite from the 24/7 intensive caregiving of their loved one, some of our families have been waiting for new staff for over 5 years.

The people in our care are looking for staff who are engaged in their hopes, dreams and development. Staff who provide Individualized Home Supports with and without Training assist our clients to develop and maintain the skills to thrive in their homes and in the community. The lack of support staff has stifled this growth and has led to an increase in isolation, depression, anxiety and behaviors that have put a strain on our healthcare systems.

These services, IHS and Respite, need a rate that is nimble and responsive to the economy to encourage the next generation of caregivers to embark on this fulfilling career, the sustained livable wage within the proposed changes will meet that need.

We urge you to not leave the people we support and this group of existing and future caregivers of Waiver Services behind.

Thank you for your time and attention to this urgent matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Sjordal".

Julie Sjordal  
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Curtis".

Lisa Curtis  
Senior Director, Disability Services

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