

House Human Services Policy

Chair Peter Fischer

February 8th, 2023

HF 1043 – Representative Hicks

Dear Chair Fischer and members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Disability is an independent state agency that serves as a policy, training, and technical resource for the state of Minnesota and Minnesotans with disabilities. We represent and advocate for over a million people with disabilities in the state of Minnesota.

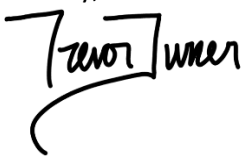
The Minnesota Council on Disability supports HF 1043 and thanks Representative Hicks for carrying the bill. HF 1043 would establish a Task Force on Disability Services Accessibility to evaluate the accessibility of current state and county disability services and to develop and evaluate plans to address barriers to accessibility.

Disability services are often a lifeline to Minnesotans with disabilities who wish to lead independent lives and live in their own communities. It is imperative that navigating these services be accessible which means that services are easily navigated without accommodation or assistance, or, if reasonable accommodations are needed to navigate services, accommodations are chosen by the person with a disability and effectively implemented without excessive burden. Inaccessible services not only violate the Americans with Disabilities Act, but also the Minnesota Human Rights Act and the Supreme Court Olmstead Decision, which states that people with disabilities have a right to live, work, and play in the communities of their choice.

It is also important that people with disabilities are at the policy-making table when creating programs and services that seek to serve the disability community. A popular mantra among people with disabilities is “Nothing About Us, Without Us” and HF 1043 satisfies this demand by bringing together a coalition of disability advocates and representatives to audit and evaluate the programs and services that are meant to improve the lives of Minnesotans with Disabilities. They will ensure that these programs and services are accessible to all and will work to identify and remove barriers that may prevent a person with a disability from accessing the services that they are not only entitled to but allow them to be an integrated member of their community.

Please support HF 1043 and support Minnesotans with disabilities.

Sincerely,

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

Trevor Turner
Public Policy Director