

January 26, 2023



Chair Pryor and House Education Policy Committee:

The Minnesota First Provider Alliance (MNFPA) was formed in 2016 as a non-profit organization for the purpose of developing and advocating for legislative and regulatory reforms and government investment in the quality and integrity of the state's personal care assistance (PCA) program. PCA agencies across Minnesota are struggling to recruit and retain workers as we seek to meet the growing need for services. We are writing you today in support of H.F. 613.

PCA agencies have struggled with staffing shortages for years. However, the current combination of rising labor costs, declining workforce participation, and low Medical Assistance reimbursement has put this industry into a crisis. Minnesota's most vulnerable citizens are at risk of not accessing services they need not only to thrive, but to merely live as independently as possible. While fully funding the PCA rate framework is vital to the long-term viability of the PCA program, H.F. 613 offers us another tool as we seek to expand and retain our workforce.

H.F. 613 is a creative solution that could encourage more teenagers to consider this sector. While some teenagers already work as PCAs, this bill would create an incentive for more students to choose this rewarding work. Students would not only be filling essential roles as PCAs and earning a paycheck, but they would also receive elective high school credits.

The crisis that our industry is facing is impacting the most vulnerable Minnesotans. We thank you ahead of time for your attention and support in addressing our workforce crisis with innovative solutions.