



**Support of H.F. 2725/S.F. 3151  
Healthy Aging Subcabinet and Citizens Engagement Council  
Kathleen Kelso, Board Member**

Where and how do you wish to live as you age? Does your town or city embrace your aging population? Will you support a statewide plan for aging residents of your district?

- Two years ago, this Committee and the Legislature agreed to establish the Legislative Task Force on Aging. Thank you. The Task Force issued their Report in January recommending a governmental entity to produce a statewide plan for our aging demographic. <https://www.lcc.mn.gov/aging/12132024/aging-final-report-1-15-2025>.
- **HF 2725/SF 3151 would establish the Healthy Aging Subcabinet and Citizens Engagement Council to conduct a public statewide examination of aging in Minnesota. This process will provide the Healthy Aging Plan with recommendations to be approved by the legislature.**
- We are all aging, yet we do not invest in ourselves and our aging communities. Minnesotans have already experienced service fragmentation and have grave concerns about the complete erosion of aging supports we once relied upon. Without an infrastructure through public/private partnerships, elders, families and our state will face greater human costs without safe and affordable communities in which we live.
- Most older adults experience changes in our mobility and abilities and some of us become disabled. We all choose to live at home for as long as possible within our communities of choice as we age.
- **HF 2725/SF 3151** is based upon the testimony described in the Task Force Report. A growing percentage of people over 65 who are not eligible or in need of publicly financed services will still require community support for affordable housing options; safe and accessible transit; access to health care and food. These future *system* improvements are dependent upon a statewide plan for healthy aging.
- **HF 2725/SF 3151** establishes a Subcabinet that would recognize the financial costs and lost opportunities for individuals, families and whole communities if we fail to plan and invest in healthy aging communities. This legislation will ensure that the entire state will be engaged in pursuing strategies that take us beyond short term projects that do not result in on-going and long-term action for aging Minnesotans.

- The **Healthy Aging Plan** would reframe our current focus of “just in time” funding for aging services every legislative session to planning for local support for community-based health care, home care and long-term care services that are already needed and will become a matter of necessity for many in the future.
- The Citizens’ Engagement Council would ensure voices and perspectives of older adults in the planning process and resulting recommendations of the Healthy Aging Plan.
- **HF 2725/SF 3151** would provide the Healthy Aging Plan by 2027 with *recommendations for public and private partnerships* for healthy aging locally and statewide to include housing, transportation and community development:
  - Housing policy for aging that meets market demand and works with developers throughout the state to stimulate innovative housing models, critical to aging in our communities where we maintain physical and mental health.
  - New housing options in Minnesota developed *with us* rather than *for us* by private equity firms – not the typical large compounds and groups settings, not affordable or of interest to most of us.
  - Innovative policies for future development of “housing with services” built to meet the growing need for care within our communities.
  - A variety of transit system options to encourage independence and access within one’s community, especially in rural MN, so that we will have access to social and civic activities, health care and food.
  - Improvements in the delivery system for home care and long-term care based on community need especially in rural Minnesota to include the absolute necessity for quality care providers.
- The State Demographer provides a glimpse of our reality today:
 

<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/aging/08242023/2-SusanBrower-Legislative-TaskForce-Aging.pdf>

  - Population aging will have permanent, far-reaching impacts.
  - The rapid and permanent transition to an older state is already occurring.
  - Greater MN has a larger share of the state’s older adults and is aging at a faster rate than the metropolitan areas in part due to outmigration of younger people.
  - 70% of women 65+ live in rural Minnesota.
  - Minnesota’s population aged 50 and older contributes \$154 billion to the state GDP while holding 1.7 million jobs, yet older workers face age discrimination and increasing challenges in securing and maintaining employment statewide.
- Full public participation is necessary for planning an effective infrastructure for aging in Minnesota. We know that staying in one’s own home – to the extent that one is able to do so - contributes to healthy living, and aging in one’s community contributes to healthy economic benefits for individuals, families, neighborhoods and towns.

Thank you for your support of aging and support for **H.F. 2725/S.F. 3151**, establishing the Healthy Aging Subcabinet.