



May 1, 2023

Human Services Conference Committee  
MN House of Representatives  
MN Senate

**SUBJECT: LETTER OF SUPPORT to ELIMINATE SUBMINIMUM WAGE**

Dear Chair Noor, Chair Hoffman, and Committee Members,

Our organization is writing to you today in support of HF 2847/SF2934 and specifically the proposal to phase out subminimum wage for people with disabilities in Minnesota.

Any person with a disability or their families will tell you there are a hundred different ways that society tells people with disabilities “You are less than.” “You are not as worthy as a non-disabled person.” “You do not deserve the minimum standards that apply to everyone else.”

Society sends that message in the judgemental looks our children receive when they may become overwhelmed in public. We see it in the treatment plans that demand eye contact or sitting still when their bodies want to move. Discrimination is also formally enshrined in law in the form of marriage penalties, the hefty fees we assess to access medical assistance, in the asset limits that keep people from getting ahead, and in our segregated school settings. Solving all the problems of ableism in the world is a tall order, but eliminating wage discrimination is not. This is a problem we are ready to not only solve, but lead!

It is time for us as a state’s policies to reflect the belief that It does not matter what your disability is, or your IQ, or how you move through the world, or how you communicate, or how much support you need. It is time for the state to confirm, loudly and unequivocally, that if you work, you are worthy of the minimum wage. Some may argue that subminimum wage is not a measure of a person’s worth, but that is EXACTLY what we are saying. It is in the name “subminimum.” As in “not worthy of the minimum standard applied to everyone else.”

This effort is being led by people with disabilities, and we acknowledge for some parents the shift of handing over power to our children feels uncomfortable, but it is time for us to listen. As parents it is our role to support, to encourage, to protect, our children, but it is not our role to be their voice. Our role is to set up the microphone, make sure it is adjusted properly, and then get out of their way.

And that is why we respectfully ask you to support the elimination of subminimum wage in the human services omnibus bill.

Sincerely,

Multicultural Autism Action Network  
Fatima Molas, Co-Founder  
Delia Samuel Ph.D., Co-Founder  
Rufo Jiru, Board Member  
Maren Christenon Hofer, Executive Director