

1.30.2023

Subject: Services for people with disabilities need your support

Dear Chair Noor and Members of the Human Service Finance Committee:

My name is Sandra Rushing. I am the parent of Sarah Rushing, a 26-year-old woman with multiple physical and development disabilities who resides at the Hope Residence in Belle Plaine, MN. Additionally, she participates in the ProAct New Options disability service and support organization in Shakopee, MN.



I am reaching out today because waiver-funded disability services are at a breaking point. We need your support to help address the current *unsustainable* workforce shortage that is resulting in significant service access barriers including group homes closing, individuals boarding in emergency rooms due to lack of available service options and individuals not being able to find caregiver support in their own homes.

My daughter's care has been negatively impacted by the low daily reimbursement rate, too few staff, and high rate of staff turnover due to shamefully low pay. We moved to Minnesota because of the perceived commitment of this state to care its most vulnerable population. What happened to that commitment? How is it possible that reimbursement rates are based on cost reports from 2000??



As my legislator, I am asking you to please speak with the Human Service Finance chair and your caucus leadership about supporting efforts to act early this session on much needed investments in the waiver-funded disability services workforce shortage. We must take steps now to better support Minnesotans with disabilities to live their best lives, and I am asking you to join me in advocating for this.

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Rushing