



RE: HF 1384 (Hicks) **MA-EPD Reform**
ATTN: Minnesota House Human Services Policy Committee
FROM: The Minnesota Council on Disability
DATE: February 22, 2023

Honorable Chair Fischer and Members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Disability urges members of the committee to support HF 1384, a bill that would eliminate income and asset limits for Minnesotans with Disabilities who receive Medical Assistance for Employed People with Disabilities (MA-EPD). Currently, the assets limits are far too low and the premiums are too high, which forces people with disabilities to forgo savings or income increases or lose their medical assistance benefits. For most people with disabilities, opportunities for increased income may actually result in a higher premium that results in a loss in income. This means wages for Minnesotan with disabilities are suppressed and economic advancement opportunities are lost, forcing many to stay in a cycle of poverty, despite being fully employed.

The Supreme Court Olmstead decision guarantees the right for people with disabilities to live and work in the communities of their choice. However, health care is incredibly important, if not a lifeline for Minnesotans with disabilities. With current asset limit and high premiums for those receiving MA-EPD, the choice to live and work in the community they want is out of reach. The Minnesota Council on Disability supports any bill that helps people with disabilities live independent lives in the communities of their choice. It takes a lot of effort and energy to overcome the barriers that society puts in front of Minnesotans with disabilities, and rather than being rewarded for receiving a higher paying job or being fiscally responsible, Minnesotans with disabilities are punished for doing something that helps them live economically independent lives.

Supporting HF 1384 means supporting Minnesotans with disabilities who want to work and be independent. It means investing in the disability community while also providing a medical lifeline. It means removing barriers that have historically kept people with disabilities from earning a livable wage. Supporting HF 1384 means removing the arbitrary barrier that society has placed on people with disabilities who want to work.

Thank you, Representative Hicks, for your support of HF 1384.

Sincerely,

Trevor Turner
Public Policy Director