

February 2, 2023

To: Members of the House Human Services Finance Committee

Re: Support for HF 240



Dear Chair Noor and Committee Members,

Founded by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota is a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization that promotes and protects the human rights of individuals with IDD, supporting them and their families in a lifetime of full inclusion and participation in their communities. We are a chapter of The Arc of the United States, the largest national community-based organization advocating for people with IDD and their families.

The Arc Minnesota strongly supports HF 240 authored by Rep. Reyer. This proposal would increase the household 40-hour cap for parents of minors and spouses on the Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) and Community First Services and Supports (CFSS) programs.

The direct care workforce crisis has impacted people with disabilities for many years and it has only gotten worse because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital that our service system can be as flexible as possible as we work to ensure people with disabilities can maintain the supports and services they need to be safe and healthy while also remaining in the homes they choose. Many people with disabilities have been forced to move out of their own homes or family homes to more costly, restrictive, congregate care settings due to the lack of adequate staffing.

One tool in our toolbox is lifting the 40-hour limit that a parent or spouse can be reimbursed for providing care to their minor child or spouse. Currently, the entire household is limited to 40 hours per week, regardless of the number of parents who live in the home and provide services. This limit does not take into consideration the number of hours the person accessing services is eligible to receive. Families struggle to fill in the gaps with other staff and often have to fill many hours themselves (unpaid for hours beyond the 40-hour household limit).

HF 240 is a simple change that will make a big difference for people supported by their parent or spouse, helping ensure they can remain in the home of their choice. The Arc Minnesota urges the committee to pass HF 240 so that we can maximize the current direct care workers we have, including parents and spouses.

Thank you to Rep. Reyer for bringing this bill forward and thank you committee members for the opportunity to provide input on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Julia Page
Public Policy Director