



March 13, 2021

Representative Frank Hornstein
545 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Hornstein:

On behalf of the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), I am writing to ask for your support of HF 586 (Murphy), which would help sustain volunteer drivers across the state.

Access to transportation is a huge challenge for older adults who no longer drive. At the same time, accessing healthcare and avoiding isolation are increasingly important as we age. Some people can use public transit, but for more than 77,000 Minnesotans – many of them older adults living in rural communities – these options simply are not available. Minnesota volunteer drivers fill an enormous part of this service gap, providing more than 168,000 rides annually across the state.

It is increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteer drivers. This bill would eliminate one barrier for volunteer drivers, by protecting them from being classified with taxi, Uber and Lyft drivers and therefore subjected to higher insurance rates. The MBA fully supports this proposed legislation, which when implemented will help older Minnesotans statewide.

As Minnesota's State Unit on Aging, the MBA promotes policies to the state legislature, the Governor and state agencies that accurately reflect the needs and interests of older Minnesotans. The MBA also advises on and coordinates government plans around aging to ensure that Older American's Act requirements are met, while also working to create a collective vision that represents the best interests of older Minnesotans.

If we can answer any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Mezzenga', with a date '3/13/21' written below it.

Susan Mezzenga
Chair

cc: Representative Torkelson