



April 5, 2022

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services Reform Finance and Policy
RE: Senate File 4410

Dear Chair Abeler and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate File 4410 – the Human Services Reform Omnibus Bill. Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS) is grateful for your ongoing efforts to recommend and implement policy that provides practical solutions and strengthens resources for our neighbors.

LSS is a provider of essential services across all 87 counties with more than 2,500 employees and 10,000 volunteers serving 1 in 65 Minnesotans every year. We are committed to innovative, person-centered service delivery that promotes resiliency and long-term stability for people in all stages of life. We support policies that improve access to service, build community connection, and remove barriers to health and well-being for our neighbors. Thank you, again, for the opportunity to express our strong support of the following provisions:

- **Modifying the Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS) (SF2771).** Refining the DWRS by implementing regular adjustments to the Competitive Workforce Factor (CWF) is an important, long-term solution to reduce the wage gap between direct support professionals (DSPs) and comparable occupations. Additionally, this updates the timing of data utilized, which is an important step towards making the DWRS a better reflection of market costs. This progress is critical to allow providers to adapt and be responsive to market conditions.
- **Developing a Life Sharing Service Model (SF3416).** Thank you for the inclusion of engaging stakeholders and the Department of Human Services to develop recommendations for establishing Life Sharing as a covered medical assistance waiver service. This work is critical to removing barriers and increasing access to this person-centered, community-based and culturally responsive support for Minnesotans with disabilities.
- **Updating the Homeless Youth Act (SF3263).** Thank you for making updates and new investments that will strengthen resources for programs that effectively and holistically support the needs of resilient youth experiencing homelessness.

LSS is thankful for your thoughtful leadership and support of neighbors helping neighbors. If we can be of service or provide additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

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