

March 23, 2023

Dear Chair Murphy and Committee Members,

My name is Julie McDonell and I am writing to request your support for SF0999. This bill is very important not only to my family, but also to the greater disability community at large.

My 5-year-old daughter, Macy, is profoundly cognitively and physically delayed due to a rare chromosomal abnormality. She still wears diapers, and may continue to do so for her entire life. Early on, when she still fit on the infant changing tables in restrooms, I began wondering what we would do when she was bigger and infant changing tables were no longer an option. We are now at that point. Macy weighs nearly 40 pounds and is 3 feet 6 inches tall, and we no longer have any good options. Right now, we make quick trips, sometimes have to return home early, and sometimes skip out on activities altogether. When we have no choice but to change her diaper, we use the floor of our wheelchair modified van. This is obviously less than ideal, as it is not clean (we travel with a large mat for this purpose), lacks privacy, and can be impossible in the winter due to cold temperatures.

I refuse to change my daughter's diaper on the floor of a public restroom. Clearly this is disgusting and unsanitary, but it is also an invasion of her privacy. More importantly, however, it is outright inhumane. Macy, as well as everyone with a disability, deserves to have dignity and respect while using the restroom just as those of us without disabilities do.

I implore you to pass this bill because for too long the disabled community has been left out of the conversations and decisions that affect them the most; instead, non-disabled individuals have made decisions without the crucial input of the people who are affected by these decisions every single day.

I ask that you vote to move this bill forward as amended so that Minnesotans with disabilities can truly start being a part of our communities as the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and Olmstead Decision (1999) stated. People with disabilities deserve the same rights, dignity, and respect as those who are not disabled.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

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