



Letter of Support

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Chair Melissa Wiklund

March 21st, 2023

SF 2995 – Senator Wiklund

Dear Chair Wiklund and members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Disability supports the Disability Health Equity provisions in the Minnesota Department of Health Budget proposal SF 2930. SF 2930 includes a proposal for Developmental and Social Emotional Screening with Follow-up (Article 2 Section 74; Subd. 6 - HEALTHY BEGINNINGS, HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT) and Comprehensive and Collaborative Resource and Referral System for Children (Article 2, Section 76). Additionally, SF 2930 includes the proposal for Improving the Health and Wellbeing of People with Disabilities (Article 2, Section 41).

SF 2930 funds the following disability-related health equity initiatives:

- Collection and application of new and existing aggregated data on persons with disabilities and development of a public disability data dashboard.
- Creation of a disability population health report, including a health surveillance plan and community needs assessment.
- Creation and distribution of targeted community health improvement grants that help establish inclusive evidence-based chronic disease prevention and services for people with disabilities.
- Disability justice-oriented inclusive health trainings for public health and healthcare professionals, community-based organizations and others working with the disability community.
- Enrich relationships with the disability community through authentic engagement and creation of an external disability health advisory committee.

Disability health equity is incredibly important for the disability community. Minnesotans with disabilities face major health disparities and outcomes relative to those without disabilities. It is important to collect disability-related health data to help identify and rectify these disparities. SF 2930 contains many provisions that will address these health disparities. Disability health equity is essential for ensuring positive outcomes for people with disabilities. People with disabilities have higher rates of chronic health conditions, mental health challenges, and lower life expectancy compared to those without disabilities.

Health equity for people with disabilities is crucial because it ensures that everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal health outcomes, regardless of their disability status. It requires addressing systemic barriers, such as lack of accessible facilities, transportation, and communication, that can prevent people with disabilities from accessing healthcare services. Disability health equity is essential for ensuring that people with disabilities can lead healthy, fulfilling lives and participate fully to their communities.

Sincerely,

Trevor Turner

Public Policy Director