

March 23, 2023

Re: Support for SF 2995

To: Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee



Dear Chair Wiklund 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 supports the proposal in SF 2995 aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities (Article 2, Section 41). This bill will support the Minnesota Department of Health in strengthening their capacity to serve and improve the health of people with disabilities. It is imperative that we as a state provide comprehensive public health planning for people with disabilities.

Decisions are made every day that directly impact the lives of people with disabilities in our state departments and legislature. The proposal includes an important commitment to enriching relationships with the disability community through authentic engagement and creation of an external disability health advisory committee. This will ensure that people most impacted are not only present but a part of decision-making.

Additionally, the proposal includes funding for disability justice-oriented inclusive health trainings for public health and healthcare professionals, community-based organizations, and others working with the disability community. This will help advance the disability justice movement through healthcare systems and beyond.

The Arc Minnesota is appreciative of this important inclusion in SF 2995 and we are committed to partnering with the Department of Health to ensure the success of these initiatives. The Arc Minnesota encourages the committee to support this proposal.

Sincerely,

Julia Page
Public Policy Director