

February 15, 2023

Re: Support for SF 1597

To: Members of the Senate Human Services Committee



Dear Chair Hoffman 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.

In 2021, the legislature passed a bill that allowed Community First Services and Supports (CFSS) workers to drive people accessing services. However, with the delayed implementation of CFSS, that flexibility is not available under our current Personal Care Assistance (PCA) program.

We strongly support SF 1597 which would add driving to the definition of Instrumental Activities of Daily Living to the current PCA statute. People accessing PCA services are negatively impacted by this limitation because they are not able to access their community and other needs. Some people are not able to access their community at all and this bill would change that.

This bill is about inclusion. People with disabilities deserve to have full access to their community. People who feel a sense of belonging tend to lead happier and healthier lives, and strong communities create a more stable and supportive society.¹ When people with disabilities are included and have more access to their community, all of society benefits. This is a simple change that will make a big difference in the lives of many people with disabilities.

Thank you, Sen. Abeler, for bringing this bill forward. The Arc Minnesota encourages the committee to pass SF 1597.

Sincerely,

Julia Page
Public Policy Director

¹ <https://extension.umn.edu/community-news-and-insights/five-ways-think-about-community>