

March 15, 2023

Re: SF 1637

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.

Minnesota's current system of services for people with disabilities forces them to live in poverty because of restrictive financial policies. The Arc Minnesota strongly supports SF 1637 which would make Minnesota's Medical Assistance (MA) program more equitable. This bill would increase the qualifying income standard to 133% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG) and qualifying asset standard to \$20,000 for individuals and \$40,000 for married couples—overall, putting more money in people with disabilities' pockets while they can get the care they need and justifiably qualify for.

Policies that force people with disabilities to live in poverty in order to access services and supports are ableist and dehumanizing. They imply that disabled people do not deserve financial stability, let alone prosperity. When people with disabilities are barely allowed to survive, they are not allowed to thrive and flourish as valued and respected members of society. These forced poverty measures have many unjust outcomes. Many people live in fear of losing their services if they earn too much money. They face a constant threat of losing basic needs like housing, food, and healthcare. It is wrong, goes against the Minnesota's values, and this change is long overdue.

To make sure people with disabilities have the resources they need to live and thrive, we must eliminate all forced poverty measures in disability policy—starting with passing SF 1637. Thank you, Sen. Fateh, for carrying this bill. We urge committee members to enthusiastically support SF 1637.

Sincerely,

Julia Page  
*Public Policy Director*