

March 24, 2023

To: Members of the Senate Human Services Committee

Re: Support for SF 2944



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.

The Arc Minnesota strongly supports HF 2944 authored by Sen. Abeler which would establish and fund a Direct Care Service Corps pilot project. The Direct Care Services Corps provides financial incentives for postsecondary students to work as personal care assistants or direct support professionals.

We need to address the direct care workforce shortage from all angles, which includes innovative solutions like this one. We must work to ensure people with disabilities can maintain the supports and services they need to be safe and healthy while also remaining in their own homes, in their communities. The direct care staffing shortage has made this increasingly difficult for Minnesotans with disabilities and for many, they have to choose between their health and safety needs or their autonomy. Minnesotans with disabilities rely on in-home services and we must ensure as a state that they are accessible to them. This is one way to do that.

Thank you to Sen. Abeler for bringing forward a bill that provides a creative solution to this problem that upholds the informed choice of disabled Minnesotans who want to remain in their own homes. The Arc Minnesota encourages the committee to pass SF 2944 in combination with various workforce solutions brought forward this session.

Sincerely,

Julia Page
Public Policy Director