



March 31, 2023

To: Members of the Senate Human Services Committee  
RE: SF2934 – Human Services Omnibus

Dear Chair Hoffman and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota's comments on SF2934 – the Human Services Omnibus bill. LSS is a provider of essential services across all 87 counties with more than 2,500 employees who serve one in 65 Minnesotans every year. This includes services that are innovative and person-centered for older adults and people with disabilities.

LSS' wide array of services are designed to meet the unique needs of individuals in a variety of settings and support them to live the life they imagine for themselves. As the need for home and community-based services grows, workforce challenges persist preventing adequate and stable resources that ensure our neighbors are supported when, where, and how they need it. We appreciate the long-term investments proposed in SF2934 that will improve access to service, build community connection, and remove barriers to health and well-being for our neighbors.

**Thank you for including the following provisions:**

**Updating the Disability Waiver Rate System.** Thank you for fully funding and implementing regular adjustments to the Competitive Workforce Factor – an important, long-term solution to reducing the wage gap between direct support professionals and comparable occupations. This provision is a critical response to supporting community providers to sustain competitive wages and benefits that reflect the professionalism and importance of the services provided.

**Increasing the limits for paid parents and spouses in CFSS and CDCS.** This is a strong solution to support people who have more than one family caregiver in their household as well as households with multiple people accessing CDCS. We hope this proposal can alleviate caregiver burnout while also acknowledging the professionalism and importance of caregiving work.

**CDCS budget parity.** Older adults in Minnesota have experienced barriers to self-direction due to the lack of parity in CDCS budgets. We strongly support this update to ensure equity across populations interested in accessing HCBS.

**Supported Decision-Making.** Thank you for the investment to help develop and enhance this person-centered service for people with disabilities, older adults, and their support networks of family, friends, and professionals. This is will support facilitating a culture shift toward this less restrictive alternative to guardianship and conservatorship.



**Life Sharing Development.** Thank you for the inclusion of engaging stakeholders and the Department of Human Services to develop recommendations for establishing Life Sharing as a medical assistance waiver service. This work is critical to removing barriers and increasing access to this person-centered, community-based, and culturally responsive support for Minnesotans with disabilities.

LSS is thankful for your thoughtful leadership and support of neighbors helping neighbors. Please contact me at [erin.sutton@lssmn.org](mailto:erin.sutton@lssmn.org) if we may provide further information.

Sincerely,

Erin Sutton, MSW, LGSW  
Senior Director of Advocacy  
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota