



To: Senate Jobs and Economic Development Committee

Please support SF 1779 which would provide increased funding to the Individual Placement and Support program. Our agency implemented the evidence based practice in 2014 and have since placed 166 individuals out of 203 for 82% placement.

These people have been helped through increased self-esteem, better control of psychiatric symptoms, reduced hospitalizations, reduced criminal justice involvement, increased self-sufficiency and decreased dependence upon others. Not to mention having income from working.

We serve individuals in Pipestone, Rock, Nobles, Jackson and Cottonwood Counties. Minnesota is the leading the country in placement numbers and across the world, where IPS is practiced. Without the funding increase, current projects will be cut by 27%, leading to about 350 people losing access to services. Passing SF 1779 will preserve services for these 350 people and allow for an increase to serve an additional 325 people.

Increased access to services throughout Minnesota is a critical need. Only 44 of Minnesota's 87 counties have some access to IPS services. In addition to expanded geographic access, there is significant need to expand access to services for individuals with serious mental illness who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

The IPS program is evidence based and easily administered to all people in need of services. Lack of employment leads to high rates of poverty and poses a threat to the health and well-being of communities and people across the state. Please give the bill serious consideration as it is a win-win for Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Michael Dempster  
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