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Chair Hoffman and Members of the Committee on Human Services
MN Senate
MN Senate Building
95 University Ave, W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hoffman and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

My name is Angela Strasser from Farmington. I am writing to you in support of SF 3841.

As an FRS provider for the last 5 years, it's important to the individuals I support to see SF 3841 bill get passed. My name is Angela Strasser, I reside in Farmington, MN, and support three disabled adults in a Foster Care setting, referred to as an FRS. We are a residential home that is part of a thriving community in Dakota County.

My entire adult life has been supporting the disabled community in one capacity or another. I have supported individuals while in institutions and celebrated when the same individuals were able to choose the community in which they wanted to live and work. I moved to Minnesota in 1999 due to Minnesota's leadership and direction of this change. I decided to open our home in 2019 to complex need individuals who were unsuccessful with placement within other programs.

We provide intensive services to individuals, both complex medical and severe mental health related. These individuals deal with trauma. They need additional love and support as they were not successful in other settings. They were in and out of crisis, over medicated, stuck in a hospital bed without guidance and case managers scrambling to find anyone to place them. Together, in our home, we have been able to provide support and guidance to reduce their fears, uncertainties, and breakthrough some of the trauma they have not dealt with in the past. The continuity of care is superior. Medication reductions, weight loss, nutrition, a variety of therapies that would have never been researched or discovered had they not resided in our home and the overall reassurance that we are the same people that will be there for them daily. They don't worry about who will help them in the shower, who will help them through an anxiety attack or when the voices start will they be disregarded. We will be the same individuals who will work through their toughest days and celebrate their best days.

I could type endless pages of how we have been successful, their guardians and case managers can tell you as well. The difference is our commitment to them residing in our home and being there through it all. Having structure to meet their needs, their goals and support their dreams. It's exhausting and we are always on our toes as we experience a variety of curve balls during our day. It could be the Amazon delivery guy who looks like the person who previously abused them

or a noise that happened in the grocery store that triggered an outburst. We are there for them through everything, 24/7, 365 days. The same people, always!

This is important to the individuals we support, me and our FRS community because the individuals we support would lose that security if the tier rate goes into effect. It will throw the entire system on its back and individuals will be looking for placement again because we will be unable to operate with such low rates and the inability to request exceptions. This is not a cookie cutter program. Everyone has their own challenges and abilities and to help individuals move forward in their life we are exceptionally important to the system.

In conversations with other residential providers, there are approximately 1168, 70% of said providers would not be able to continue and would need to look for other employment. It would be beyond devastating. Please come to our homes, talk to the individuals supported and ask them what impact we have had on their entire life, their extended family, and the overall community in which they chose to live. We need to be able to share the truth in the value we have to Minnesota. We wear many hats, have endless paperwork just like corporate settings and we are also their full-time care providers. The clock doesn't stop for us, ever! We continue to ensure all their needs are met, exceeded and for their next steps to be addressed, without FRS providers the state will experience a whole new set of challenges in an already compromised workforce.

Chair Hoffman and Members of the Human Services Committee I want to sincerely thank you for your time and the work you do at the legislature.

Sincerely,

Angela Strasser