



April 17, 2024

Sen. John Hoffman, Chair
Senate Human Services Committee
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2111
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Senate Omnibus Supplemental Human Services Appropriation Bill (S.F. 5335)

Dear Chair Hoffman and members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

The Residential Providers Association of Minnesota ("RPAMN") is a 501(c)(6) non-profit trade association that represents small, residential customized living and waivers service providers in Minnesota. The vast majority of RPAMN members are BIPOC-owned, culturally-specific service providers who might not otherwise be engaged in the policy development and legislative processes.

We are writing you to express our gratitude for the inclusion of a grant opportunity for culturally specific education for 144G and 245D providers as it relates to the most appropriate license and support in transitioning (Article 1, Sections 20-21). We are also grateful for the inclusion of a grant opportunity for culturally specific 144G provider education and support for physical plant and compliance (line 385 of the spreadsheet).

We are also writing with a request that the committee consider adding language to S.F. 5335 that would allow small assisted living to relocate their licensed facility. In recent years, the Minnesota Legislature established a statutory moratorium prohibiting MDH from licensing new assisted living facilities and DHS from enrolling new customized living settings serving four or fewer people in a single-family home serving individuals on the CADI/BI waivers. However, many of RPAMN's predominately BIPOC members, do not currently own the homes where they operate. As such, as it is currently in statute, the moratorium places the longevity and viability of many BIPOC-owned business entirely in the hands of their landlords. Providers are unable to move, either because they have purchased a new, permanent residential setting or to avoid an unscrupulous landlord who could be using the moratorium to take advantage of the BIPOC service providers. We urge you to adopt an amendment to address this issue so that providers are not held captive by landlords or remain stuck in a home that is not safe for the residents.

Lastly, we would like to express deep concern for two proposals included in the bill that create an undue burden on 144G licensed providers, but especially small providers like those who make up RPAMN's membership. The proposal in Article 2, Sections 1 and 4-6, would put a significant financial strain on RPAMN's members. Many small providers would not be able to afford to hire a pharmacist for quarterly reviews and 144G's current standards for client medication regimen are meeting the needs of residents. Additionally, RPAMN has concerns with the proposal in Article 2, Sections 2-3, as it fails to include support or resources to providers to meet such training requirements. RPAMN is supportive of the intention and sees value in this training, but we are concerned with the language as drafted. We respectfully request that these sections be removed for further discussion.

Thank you for the work you do and for your support of Minnesotans with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Zahnia Harut, President
Residential Providers Association of Minnesota