

Dear Senator Chair Cwodzinski and Committee Members,

My name is Deqa Farah, and I am the parent of a child with a disability who requires significant support in his daily life. I am writing to express my strong support for SF0507, which seeks to improve language accessibility for families navigating disability services in Minnesota.

I am fortunate to hold several degrees and certifications, which have enabled me to fully understand the English language and navigate complex systems. However, I am here to speak on behalf of many families in my community who do not have the same privilege. Parents who are not fluent in English face overwhelming barriers when trying to access critical disability services for their children. From completing applications to communicating with providers, the lack of accessible language support makes it incredibly difficult for them to advocate for their children's needs.

For many families, this is not just an inconvenience—it is a crisis. When language barriers prevent parents from understanding their rights, available services, or medical recommendations, it directly impacts the well-being of their children. No parent should have to watch their child struggle simply because they cannot access information in their native language.

I have personally witnessed many families give up trying to seek services for their children simply because they are unable to understand the language needed to navigate disability services. Many are overwhelmed, seeking help, but never finding it.

SF0507 is a crucial step toward making disability services equitable for all Minnesota families. By expanding translation and interpretation services, this bill would ensure that all parents—regardless of the language they speak—can make informed decisions about their children's care. I urge you to support SF0507 and stand with the many families who need this legislation to break down the barriers preventing them from accessing essential services.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to supporting children with disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

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