

February 14, 2025

Re: Governor's Human Services Budget

Dear Chair Hoffman, Ranking Minority Member Rasmusson, and Members of the Committee,

The Arc Minnesota thanks you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding the Governor's budget. Founded by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota is a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization that promotes and protects the human rights of individuals with IDD, supporting them and their families in a lifetime of full inclusion and participation in their communities. We are a chapter of The Arc of the United States, the largest national community-based organization advocating for people with IDD and their families.

While we understand the need to balance the budget and appreciate the challenge you are faced with, we strongly believe this should not be done by compromising the lives and wellbeing of Minnesota's disability community. Although we are opposed to the majority of these cuts, we will limit this letter to our four biggest concerns.

1. The cap on inflation. Capping inflation will exacerbate the staffing crisis. Capping inflation will create unsafe situations at home and force people who can no longer find homecare workers to move to group homes and institutional settings. It will create unsafe situations in institutional settings. It will force facilities to close.
2. The 351-day cap on residential services. We believe that the resulting budget fallout will also have a dire effect on staffing. Facilities will close, services will decline, and people who need residential placement will stay in hospitals until beds are available.
3. Likewise, we believe the changes to the absence and utilization factor in day services will also have a tremendous negative impact on staffing and force facilities to close.
4. The daily time limitation of eight hours on Individualized Home Supports (IHS) with training services will have a profound effect on the ability of Minnesotans with disabilities to either move to their own homes or remain in their own homes, especially for Minnesotans in rural areas.

These proposed cuts limit payment for waiver services, and if they were to go into effect, Minnesotans with disabilities would lose services. These budget cuts threaten to further exacerbate the staffing shortages that already exist. Cutting these vital services will negatively impact other parts of our healthcare system.

We are grateful to the committee for continuing to advocate for the disability community, and look forward to continue partnering on this work.

Sincerely,

Tina Rucci

Public Policy Director, The Arc Minnesota