



3.21.25

Re: Support for SF 2796 – Waiver Case Management Rate Increase

Chair Hoffman and Members of the Human Services Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support for SF 2796, which seeks to address the human services workforce crisis by increasing reimbursement rates for waiver case management and establishing a long-term framework for fair compensation and workforce stability.

Jewish Family Service of St. Paul provides waiver case management to individuals with disabilities in Ramsey and Hennepin Counties. Every day, our five case managers help individuals with disabilities access critical services, coordinate care, and advocate for their needs, allowing them to live independently. However, despite the essential nature of this work, reimbursement rates have not increased since 2015, and agencies like ours are struggling to recruit and retain qualified case managers.

The workforce shortage has reached a crisis point. We often lose experienced case managers for higher-paying roles outside the field because they cannot afford to stay. This loss means higher caseloads for the remaining staff and less time for each individual client. Without action, the situation will continue to worsen, leaving people with disabilities without the consistent, high-quality case management support they need.

SF 2796 takes essential steps to stabilize the waiver case management workforce by:

- Increasing reimbursement rates to help agencies offer competitive wages and retain skilled professionals.
- Requiring an annual labor market analysis to ensure rates reflect real workforce conditions.
- Establishing a structured review process to prevent future stagnation in funding.

These changes will help address workforce shortages, reduce service disruptions, and ensure that people with disabilities receive the high-quality case management they deserve. Case managers ensure state disability funds are used effectively, and investing in this workforce now will prevent higher costs down the road.

Failing to act means more case managers leaving the field, more families struggling to navigate complex systems alone, and more Minnesotans with disabilities losing access to vital supports. By passing SF 2796, Minnesota can make a much-needed investment in the stability and well-being of both case managers and the people they serve.

We urge you to support this critical legislation. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to strengthening Minnesota's human services workforce. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions at rokon@jfssp.org.

Sincerely,
Ruth Olkon

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Jewish Family Service of St. Paul is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) agency and partner agency of the St. Paul Jewish Federation.

