



March 26, 2025

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

**RE: S.F. 2640, SEIU Collective Bargaining Agreement**

Chair Hoffman and members of the Senate Human Services Committee:

The Minnesota First Provider Alliance (the "Provider Alliance") is a trade association of personal care assistance (PCA)/Community First Services and Supports (CFSS) agencies and waiver service providers. The PCA/CFSS program is a critical service that assists over 47,000 Minnesotans in their home and community. We are writing in support of S.F. 2640, the ratification of the state's collective bargaining agreement with Service Employees International Union of Minnesota (SEIU).

The Provider Alliance is supportive of the provision in S.F. 2640 to increase the enhanced PCA/CFSS rate from 7.5% to 12.5%. The enhanced rate has been in place since 2018 and was championed by Senator Abeler and the late Senator Relph. The intent was to reward PCAs who provided care to Minnesotans with the highest care needs, because they often have a greater level of difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff. This has led to individuals having no choice but to relinquish their preferred option of living in the community or even going without the care they need. We have seen over the years that the creation of the enhanced rate has improved the lives of people accessing services. Increasing the enhanced rate will help ensure people with disabilities can pay higher wages to attract and retain staff and therefore maintain their choice of living in their communities.

While the enhanced rate is essential to those who are eligible and have access to it, there are still barriers to access. The legislature should also consider changes to the training that is required of workers to access the enhanced rate. S.F. 815 (Fateh) seeks to create a new pathway to access. The bill, as introduced, proposes that personal health care providers, the worker training and development professional, parents, spouses - or even the service recipient themselves - could provide the requisite training that is based on the care needs of the individual to qualify for the enhanced rate. This change would allow a training option that is tailored to those individuals' care needs and allow more PCAs and CFSS workers to qualify for a higher wage.

A combination of increasing the enhanced rate and increasing access to the enhanced rate can help stabilize the workforce for Minnesotans with high support needs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.F. 2640. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dena Belisle, President  
Minnesota First Provider Alliance