

April 2, 2025

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

Dear Chair Hoffman and Members of the Human Services Committee:

ARRM is a statewide trade association of over 230 provider organizations, businesses, and advocates dedicated to leading in the advancement of Home and Community-Based Services that support both adults and children with disabilities. On behalf of our members, we want to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SF 2443 as amended by the A5 amendment.

First, we would like to offer our strong support for the following proposals:

- **Article 1, Section 12:** Amending the frequency of a full MnCHOICES assessment and providing for the option of an abbreviated annual assessment.
- **Article 1, Section 17:** Amending the effective date for the Disability Waiver Rate System Compensation Thresholds to 2029, providing both providers and the Department of Human Services the time needed to ensure that the Cost Reporting tool is an effective way to accurately capture service-related costs.
- **Article 1, Section 19:** Requiring engagement between the Department of Human Services and stakeholders in reviewing, updating, and revising the format for rate exceptions, allowing for more transparency and collaboration.

Next, we would also like to take this opportunity to oppose the language included in **Article 1, Section 1** of the bill which would impose proximity limitations on the location of future Community Residential Settings, and **Article 2, Section 25** which would impose proximity limits on small Assisted Living homes.

In cities and counties across the state, Community Residential Settings operate as valued neighbors and safe homes for people with disabilities. As members of the Human Services Committee, you have been the driving force in ensuring that people with disabilities have access to live in whatever community they choose to live in. We are concerned that by including the language in Article 1, Section 1, and Article 2, Section 25 of the bill, we will be putting in place a policy that will limit those choices.

While we understand that the proponents of this proposal have concerns regarding the high concentration of community residential settings and small assisted living homes in certain communities, we would point the committee toward the federally mandated Home and Community-Based Settings Rule. This is a tool we should be leaning on to control



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concentration, not proximity limitations, which may go against the Fair Housing Act.¹

The Home and Community-Based Settings Rule regulates where homes can be located in our communities and ensures that no home is isolating to the people living there and that people with disabilities are fully integrated into our communities. As opposed to putting in place barriers that limit where people with disabilities can live, we should continue the work of establishing affordable, accessible housing options across the state.

Finally, we would like to draw the committee's attention to the Residential Support Criteria contained in **Article 1 Sections 14 and 17**. While this language was originally passed by the legislature in 2021, implementation of the criteria has not moved forward. We would encourage the committee to consider the changing dynamics we are currently under as a state and delay the implementation of these new criteria.

Sincerely,

Sara Grafstrom
Senior Director of State and Federal Policy, ARRM

¹ (1999). Department of Justice: "Joint Statement of the Department of Justice and the Department of Housing and Urban Development." <https://www.justice.gov/crt/joint-statement-department-justice-and-department-housing-and-urban-development>.

