

Dear members of the Senate,

My name is Linda Fairchild, and I have a 4-bedroom Family Residential Service (FRS), home called Fairchild's FosterCare. This means that I live in my home 24/7 and provide care 24/7. This is what my husband and I have chosen to do for 30+ years. We care for 4 adults with high medical and behavioral needs such as needing: Hoyer lift to move, monitoring of constant seizures, gastrostomy tube feedings, catheters and being dependent for all cares.

I love what I do. My favorite time is getting them up in the morning and putting them to bed, so I then know how their day begins and ends. But right now, I am in jeopardy of not being able to continue to do this if you do not push back the Flat Tier Rate for FRS Homes.

I do all the same paperwork and cares for those in my home like would happen in a CRS home but now I am being told that I need to do that for 50% less pay. I am also told that there is no negotiation just take it or leave it is what DHS has told all the FRS providers.

I can't imagine many people doing the same job for 50% less pay and staying there.

All I want is a fair wage so I can take care of those in my home with respect and dignity. They will be losing their right to choose who and where they want to live. That is taking away their ability to choose how and with whom they will desire to live with. They are my life and my family. In a family home we all do the same things, and the consistency is key as have persons with OCD and you need stability to be successful with them.

I also want to share that most FRS home providers do not know that this bill has passed in 2023 just like many of the House of Representatives or Senators did not realize this. It was not published with the Legislative update that normally happens in the DHS follow up to all. I was on that call and asked why? I was told it was a mistake. I have been trying ever since to get the state to publish this to ALL FRS providers so that they could be aware of this change that is coming but have not been successful for the past 2 year. How would you like to turn in your time sheet and find out that your pay is reduced from \$17 hour to \$12 hour? That is the pay for the high end of the Flat Rate tiers.

I get that the DWRS frameworks has a cost, but it pays us fair. What will the state of Minnesota do when 15 or 50 or 200 FRS homes close? That cost to move them to a CRS is significantly more.

Please I beg of you to move FRS Flat Rate till 2028 so that an appropriate resolution for pay can be found.

Thank you for your time.

Linda Fairchild

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