

**April 8, 2025**

**Re: SF 3054**

Chair Hoffman and Members of the Human Services Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments on SF 3054. The Minnesota Social Service Association (MSSA) is made up of over 5,000 health and human service (HHS) professionals statewide. Our members cover the health and human service spectrum—mental health providers, social workers, case managers, etc.—and are employed by for-profit and nonprofit entities, as well as state and local government agencies.

We seek your support to build a stronger HHS workforce in Minnesota. Among the many issues we're supporting this session, from investments in child welfare, our workforce, direct care and treatment, the mental health system, substance use and disorder services, housing and shelter, home and community-based services and more, we ask that you include the following provisions in final negotiations including:

**Waiver Case Management Reimbursement Rates**

MSSA strongly supports SF 2796, which would update waiver case management reimbursement rates for the first time in a decade. Since 2015, when rates were increased by only 1%, the demands on case managers have grown significantly—while reimbursement has remained stagnant. Case managers are the backbone of Minnesota's home and community-based services, helping individuals with disabilities, mental health needs, and aging-related challenges access the supports that allow them to live independently. Without adequate funding, counties and providers are struggling to recruit and retain this essential workforce, putting continuity of care at risk. This investment is not just about fairness—it's about protecting the stability and quality of services Minnesotans rely on every day. We urge you to include SF 2796 in your final budget proposal to support a system that serves some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

**Nonemergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Reimbursement Rates**

MSSA supports increasing reimbursement rates for nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) to ensure Minnesotans can access essential healthcare services. Current rates are too low to sustain reliable, accessible transportation—especially in rural areas and for individuals who use wheelchairs. While we are thankful for the investments outlined in SF 1953 to increase the base rate for NEMT protected transport, we also ask that you include the investments outlined in SF 2125 for unassisted transportation, assisted transportation, and lift-equipped/ramp transport. These investments are critical to strengthening a struggling NEMT system as a whole and ensuring access for all who rely on it.

**Senior Nutrition Program Investments**

MSSA supports SF 2383, which would provide ongoing funding for the senior nutrition program for Minnesota's aging population. One in two older adults is at risk for malnutrition, and access to reliable transportation and basic support services can be the difference between living independently and requiring costly institutional care. Without continued investment, nearly half a million fewer meals will be available to older adults in 2025 compared to 2024. As SNAP benefits decline and demand rises, these services are critical lifelines—particularly for low-income and rural seniors. We ask that members take the position of the Senior Meals and Services Coalition in your final budget proposal.

Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to share our support for the measures you've included in SF 3054 on behalf of our members and the clients they serve. We recognize that this is a difficult budget year and that you are faced with many hard decisions. We are truly grateful for your continued commitment to Minnesota's health and human service system, and we hope our top priorities will be included in the final budget package. Please reach out to us with any questions, comments, or concerns at [msancartier@mnssa.org](mailto:msancartier@mnssa.org).

Sincerely,

Michelle SanCartier  
MSSA Director of Public Policy & Advocacy  
Minnesota Social Service Association

Beth Ringer  
MSSA Executive Director  
Minnesota Social Service Association