



MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Senator Jennifer McEwan, Chair
Human Service Finance
March 11, 2025

Chair McEwan and Labor Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW - MN), we are writing in support of SF2149, a bill that addresses pay when employers hold a 14(c) exemption certificate.

NASW - MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state, representing over 2000 social workers. Our members do both direct practice (clinical and non-clinical) and macro practice. We work as mental health professionals, in child welfare systems, nursing homes, home care settings, and residential care. We advocate for people who are positively impacted by components of this bill, and want to ensure that social work professionals are supported in their work.

Social work is based on a mission to enhance the well-being of humans. Our core values include the dignity and worth of individuals and the importance of human relationships. We believe individuals have the right to self-determination. Eliminating the practice of paying people with disabilities less than minimum wage supports all of these principles.

We demonstrate that we value people when we pay them a fair wage that is comparable to others. Ensuring that disabled people have the same labor rights as other Minnesotans will not only increase their sense of self-worth, it will improve their lives as they have more options to participate in the marketplace. Furthermore, life is more fulfilling when we can choose our place of employment. We can create and maintain relationships at work while also earning the income we need. Support services for people with disabilities have evolved since the practice of subminimum started decades ago, and we are able to train and support people with disabilities to successfully work in many settings.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Karen E. Goodenough'.

Karen E. Goodenough, PhD, LGSW
Executive Director
NASW-MN

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jenny Arneson'.

Jenny Arneson, MSW, LGSW
Legislative Consultant
NASW-MN