March 5, 2025
To: Chair Klein and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee
Re: Support for SF 1101

On behalf of the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD), we urge your support for SF1101, which would require insurance coverage for communication devices and the services that make them effective.

MNCCD is a statewide coalition of over 40 disability advocacy organizations, disability service providers, and individual self-advocates. Our members work directly with Minnesotans whose daily functioning, safety, and community participation depend on access to appropriate communication supports.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) refers to tools and strategies that support or replace spoken language for people with communication difficulties. AAC devices come in several different forms including tablets, communication books, and speech-generating devices. For many people, AAC is the primary means to express needs, participate in education and employment, access health care, and exercise autonomy.

Timely access to properly assessed and fitted AAC devices produces measurable benefits: stronger relationships, greater independence and participation, improved health and safety, and increased educational and employment opportunities. Lack of access leads to isolation, frustration, miscommunication in care settings, and false assumptions about a person's abilities.

SF1101 addresses a clear gap by ensuring insurance covers not only devices but the allied services essential for meaningful communication. When a person has access to an effective and durable AAC device, it helps avoid costly downstream outcomes such as preventable hospitalizations, educational setbacks, or unnecessary institutional placement.

We strongly urge your support for SF1101 to ensure Minnesotans who need AAC can obtain it without prohibitive cost or delay.

Sincerely,

KiloMarie Granda | Danielle Indovino Cawley

Policy Co-Chairs - Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities