March 28, 2016

Re: HF 559

Dear Members of the Minnesota Legislature:

The Minnesota Asset Building Coalition (MABC) strongly supports House File 559, which would increase the asset limits and excess income standards for Medical Assistance eligibility for elderly Minnesotans and Minnesotans with disabilities. Existing law unfairly disadvantages this population – consisting of Minnesota’s most vulnerable persons – by requiring them, unlike any other group, to spend down to 80% of the federal poverty level and exhaust precious assets in order to qualify for this critical health care program. HF 559 would rectify this disparate treatment.

The MABC is a coalition of 131 organizations across the state committed to creating opportunities for Minnesotans to achieve greater financial stability by building assets. The income and asset restrictions contained in current law impacting only elderly Minnesotans and Minnesotans with disabilities forces them to choose between necessary medical care and overall financial security and quality of life. Additionally, the current “spend-down” requirements can make it difficult for individuals to afford to live independently in their community rather than in an institutional care facility.

HF 559 would make it possible for individuals to retain their eligibility for Medical Assistance while building the financial assets necessary to maintain independence, survive ­financial setbacks, and prepare for a financially stable future. MABC urges passage of this important bill.

Sincerely,

Anna Odegaard

Legislative Advocate

Minnesota Asset Building Coalition

**Member Organizations**

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| AARP Minnesota  African American Leadership Forum  African Development Center  African Economic Development Solutions  African Immigrant Services  African Women’s Alliance  All Parks Alliance for Change  Anoka County Community Action Program, Inc.  Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency  Arrowhead Head Start  Asian Economic Development Alliance  Asian Media Access  Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.  Bii Gii Wiin Community Development Loan Fund  Build Wealth Minnesota  Building Connections Early Childhood Initiative  Camphor Fiscally Fit Center  CAPI  Cars for Neighbors  Casa Guadalupe  Central Minnesota Sustainability Project  Children’s Defense Fund of MN  CHUM Duluth  Churches United for the Homeless  Citizens League  City of Lakes Community Land Trust  CLUES  CommonBond Communities  Community Action Center of Northfield, Inc.  Community Action Duluth  Community Action Partnership of Ramsey &  Washington Counties  Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin | Community Grassroots Solutions  Community Table Association of Cooperatives  Cornerstone  Council on Crime and Justice  Cultural Diversity Resources Inc.  Dayton’s Bluff Community Council  Douglas County Car Care Program  EMERGE Community Development  Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota  Family Means  Financial Empowerment Collaborative  Fond Du Lac Tribal and Community College  Goodwill/Easter Seals MN  Growth & Justice  Head Start- Three Rivers Community Action  Heartland Community Action Agency, Inc.  Hmong American Farmers Association  Hmong American Partnership  HOME In-Stead M.O.M.S. Program  HOME Line  Hope Community, Inc.  Immigrant Development Center of Fargo/Moorhead  Immigrant Law Center of MN  Institute for Sustainable Futures  Inter County Community Council  Inter County Community Council- Head Start  ISAIAH  Isuroon  Jewish Community Action  Joint Religious Legislative Coalition  Jordan Area Community Council  Junior Achievement  Juxtaposition Arts | KOOTASCA Community Action Partnership  Lakes & Pines Community Action Council  Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership  Land Stewardship Project  Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota  Latino Economic Development Center  Legal Services Advocacy Project  Lutheran Social Service of MN  Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership  Main Street Project  Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers  Midwest Minnesota CDC  MIGIZI Communications  Minneapolis Urban League  Minnesota Budget Project  MN Coalition for Battered Women  Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless  Minnesota Community Action Partnership  Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities  Minnesota Head Start Association  Minnesota Housing Partnership  Minnesota Valley Action Council  MNSTEP  Native American Community Development Initiative  Neighborhood Development Alliance  Nexus Community Partners  Northwest Community Action, Inc.  Northwest Head Start  Northwest Indian OIC  Nucleus Clinic  One Roof Community Housing  Pillsbury United Communities  Prepare + Prosper | PRG, Inc.  PRISM  Project for Pride in Living Inc.  Reach Up Head Start  Rice County Habitat for Humanity  Scott Carver Dakota CAP agency  SEMCAC  Shared Capital Cooperative  Somali Community Resettlement Services  Southern MN Opportunity Council  Southwest MN Housing Partnership  St Cloud NAACP  Take Action Minnesota  The Family Partnership  The Lift Garage  The Link  The Welcome Center (of Austin, Minnesota)  Three Rivers Community Action  Tri-County Action Programs  Tri-County Community Action  Tri-Valley Opportunity Council  Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity  Twin Cities LISC  United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties  United Way of Freeborn County  United Way of West Central MN  Urban Homeworks  Voices for Racial Justice  West Central MN Communities Action  Western Community Action  White Earth Investment Initiative  Willmar Area Multicultural Business Center  Wright County Community Action |