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 ForumAfrican Development Center African Economic Development SolutionsAfrican Immigrant ServicesAfrican Women’s AllianceAll Parks Alliance for ChangeAnoka County Community Action Program, Inc.Arrowhead Economic Opportunity AgencyArrowhead Head Start Asian Economic Development Alliance Asian Media AccessBi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.Bii Gii Wiin Community Development Loan FundBuild Wealth MinnesotaBuilding Connections Early Childhood Initiative Camphor Fiscally Fit CenterCAPICars for NeighborsCasa Guadalupe Central Minnesota Sustainability Project Children’s Defense Fund of MNCHUM DuluthChurches United for the Homeless Citizens League City of Lakes Community Land TrustCLUES CommonBond CommunitiesCommunity Action Center of Northfield, Inc.Community Action DuluthCommunity Action Partnership of Ramsey &  Washington CountiesCommunity Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin | Community Grassroots SolutionsCommunity Table Association of CooperativesCornerstone Council on Crime and JusticeCultural Diversity Resources Inc. Dayton’s Bluff Community Council Douglas County Car Care ProgramEMERGE Community DevelopmentFamily Assets for Independence in MinnesotaFamily MeansFinancial Empowerment CollaborativeFond Du Lac Tribal and Community CollegeGoodwill/Easter Seals MNGrowth & JusticeHead Start- Three Rivers Community ActionHeartland Community Action Agency, Inc.Hmong American Farmers AssociationHmong American PartnershipHOME In-Stead M.O.M.S. ProgramHOME LineHope Community, Inc.Immigrant Development Center of Fargo/MoorheadImmigrant Law Center of MNInstitute for Sustainable FuturesInter County Community CouncilInter County Community Council- Head StartISAIAHIsuroonJewish Community ActionJoint Religious Legislative CoalitionJordan Area Community CouncilJunior AchievementJuxtaposition Arts | KOOTASCA Community Action Partnership Lakes & Pines Community Action CouncilLakes & Prairies Community Action PartnershipLand Stewardship ProjectLao Assistance Center of MinnesotaLatino Economic Development CenterLegal Services Advocacy ProjectLutheran Social Service of MNMahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership Main Street ProjectMetropolitan Consortium of Community DevelopersMidwest Minnesota CDCMIGIZI CommunicationsMinneapolis Urban LeagueMinnesota Budget Project MN Coalition for Battered WomenMinnesota Coalition for the Homeless Minnesota Community Action PartnershipMinnesota Consortium for Citizens with DisabilitiesMinnesota Head Start AssociationMinnesota Housing PartnershipMinnesota Valley Action CouncilMNSTEPNative American Community Development Initiative Neighborhood Development AllianceNexus Community PartnersNorthwest Community Action, Inc.Northwest Head StartNorthwest Indian OICNucleus Clinic One Roof Community HousingPillsbury United CommunitiesPrepare + Prosper  | PRG, Inc.PRISMProject for Pride in Living Inc.Reach Up Head Start Rice County Habitat for HumanityScott Carver Dakota CAP agency SEMCACShared Capital CooperativeSomali Community Resettlement ServicesSouthern MN Opportunity CouncilSouthwest MN Housing PartnershipSt Cloud NAACPTake Action MinnesotaThe Family PartnershipThe Lift GarageThe LinkThe Welcome Center (of Austin, Minnesota)Three Rivers Community Action Tri-County Action ProgramsTri-County Community ActionTri-Valley Opportunity Council Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity Twin Cities LISCUnited Way of Douglas & Pope CountiesUnited Way of Freeborn CountyUnited Way of West Central MNUrban Homeworks Voices for Racial JusticeWest Central MN Communities ActionWestern Community ActionWhite Earth Investment Initiative Willmar Area Multicultural Business CenterWright County Community Action |