

RE: **Employment and Retention of Employees with Disabilities**  
ATTN: Template  
DATE: May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Conference Senators and Representatives,

The Minnesota Council on Disability is leading efforts to increase disability representation in the Minnesota state government workforce. We request that the State Government Conference Committee make these provisions in [HF 4283 Secs 38 -54 Lines 34.24 48.30](#) a priority in the Omnibus State Government finance bill. We believe that more disability representation in our state enterprise, especially those in leadership positions, will lead to better decisions being made around state disability policies.

These provisions would codify the recommendations made by the Advisory Task Force on the Employment & Retention of Employees with Disabilities. In addition, these provisions revises Minnesota Statutes Chapter 43A, which governs the hiring and retention of employees. Finally, HF 4283 Secs 38 -54 Lines 34.24 48.30 would demonstrate the State of Minnesota's commitment to the hiring, retention, and advancement of people with disabilities by: modernizing outdated and potentially discriminatory language, creating more clarity & consistency on disability employment policy, training/educating hiring managers, providing a support structure for employees with disabilities, and adding capacity for essential equity work.

These provisions do the following:

- Codifies [Gov. Dayton Executive Order 14-14](#) & [Gov. Walz Executive Order 19-15](#)
- Improves the implementation and execution of the [Connect 700](#) program
- Provides direction to MMB regarding disability policies and employment
- Codifies and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of ADA coordinators in state agencies
- Standardizes the training of hiring managers and ADA coordinators across all state agencies
- Establishes a data collection and reporting structure on the advancement of employees with disabilities

Minnesotans often face difficult or even insurmountable barriers in finding and maintaining employment. The state of Minnesota is no exception. Unfortunately, Minnesota does not have adequate disability representation in its workforce. Far too often, policies that significantly impact Minnesotans with disabilities are decided by a small group of non-disabled policymakers. Minnesotans with disabilities need not only our voices to be heard, but a seat at the state governing table. These are "*Nothing About Us Without Us*" provisions, which would require more consultation with people with disabilities and those who are disability employment experts. Increasing disability employment and retention among the state government workforce creates a pipeline of future leaders and policymakers in our state enterprise system. When Minnesotans with disabilities make decisions in our agencies, the disability community in our state will be better represented in, and better served by, our state government.

Thank you,

Trevor Turner  
Public Policy Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Trevor Turner'.