



March 14, 2023

Chair Liebling and members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is MaChar Kingstrom and I serve as the Director of Human Resources at S. John's Lutheran Community. I write to you on behalf of SJLC in support of HF2090 (Reyer) and its proposed increase in funding for the Minnesota Department of Health Summer Health Care Internship Program (SHCIP).

Through direct financial support for paid summer internships, SHCIP seeks to continue addressing health care workforce shortages by introducing secondary and postsecondary students to careers in health care in a non-classroom environment dedicated to their learning. SHCIP helps fund at least one-half the costs of employing the secondary and postsecondary summer health care interns working in hospitals, clinics, nursing facilities and home care providers. This is a valuable resource as health care organizations continue to suffer financially from increased costs, such as workforce and continuing impacts from COVID-19.

St. John's has participated in SHCIP and has employed multiple interns over the years we have participated in the program. SHCIP interns at our facilities directly engage with the care process by increasing the residents' day to day activities. The interns generally work in the activity department, where they learn so much about the lives of the residents and all the great opportunities there are for working in long term care. They work closely with the residents in meaningful activities like gardening, cooking, art, day trips on the bus, just to name a few. I can't begin to describe how vital it is to have these summer interns and what they mean for our summer activity program. That is one value, the other value is everything the intern learns about what it takes to run a long term care center, they walk away with many tools in their toolbelts and experiences that last a life time.

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) currently estimates over 50,000 open health care jobs across our state. This is a crisis, and it is not sustainable for the care that all Minnesotans deserve. Multiple steps must be

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taken at the legislature to address this shortage, including increased funding for SHCIP.

We urge you and this Committee to support HF 2090 (Reyer) and increase the ability of St. John's Lutheran Community to foster interest amongst our states secondary and postsecondary students in pursuing a health care career and expand the pipeline for Minnesota's health care workforce.

Thank you for your consideration for my comments.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "MaChar Kingstrom". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

MaChar Kingstrom  
Director of Human Resources  
St. John's Lutheran Community  
Albert Lea, MN