



February 11, 2015

Representative Nick Zerwas
433 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Zerwas,

The Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) wishes to convey its support for HF210, your bill that would require hospitals to provide patients an opportunity to designate a caregiver in their medical records, receive prior notice of their loved one being discharged from a hospital, and for those caregivers to receive aftercare instructions prior to discharge.

The MBA is designated as the State Unit on Aging for Minnesota for the purposes of administering the federal Older Americans Act. Its 25 board members are appointed by the governor and represent diverse backgrounds, ages, interests and communities across the state.

The MBA is a strong advocate for supporting the needs of family caregivers. The MBA recognizes family caregivers as the foundation of Minnesota's long term service and support system, helping Minnesotans of all ages to remain living in the community. Health care experts say caregiver training and engagement is vital to improving care transitions—when patients are discharged from the hospital—and preventing costly readmissions. Family caregivers must receive more information and training about the care expected to be given by them, which in turn then can prevent people from returning to costly hospital stays and/or more permanent costly permanent alternatives.

The mission of the MBA is to ensure that older Minnesotans and their families are effectively served by state and local policies and programs in order to age well and live well. In addition to administering programs that serve family caregivers, including information and assistance, education and training, consultation, and respite care services, we advocate for the needs of family caregivers in all arenas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Samuelson".

Don Samuelson, Chair