



March 5, 2021

To: Chair Nelson and members of the House State Government Finance and Elections Committee
RE: HF 1685

Dear Chair Nelson and Members of the State Government Finance and Elections Committee,

We write on behalf of the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD), a broad coalition of over 30 advocacy and provider organizations working to improve the lives of people with disabilities. We write to express our support of HF 1685, which would ratify the contract negotiated between the state of Minnesota and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Healthcare Minnesota. Thank you, Chair Nelson, for your leadership on this important issue.

The members of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota who provide Personal Care Assistance (PCA) services provide essential services to people who have disabilities across Minnesota. The PCA program is a flexible program that is utilized by many people who have disabilities who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Ratifying this contract that honors the important work of PCAs is key to MNCCD's principals of equity and justice.

The supports that people who have disabilities receive from their PCAs are essential to their lives and it is especially important that the people providing the service are compensated fairly for their important work. This contract is an essential step to recognize that important work. Under Minnesota's Olmstead Plan, adopted by the State of Minnesota in response to a legal settlement in 2011, people with disabilities are entitled to live, learn, work, participate in their communities and enjoy life in the most integrated setting possible. PCAs are a key part of our state's approach to ensure that people who have disabilities have the support they need to live their lives in the communities that they choose.

Thank you for your support of HF 1685 and to Chair Nelson for championing this bill.

Maren Hulden and Melissa Haley
MNCCD Policy Committee Co-Chairs