



April 8, 2022

Representative Jennifer Schultz
473 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Jamie Gulley
President

Dear Chair Schultz:

Jigme Ugen
Executive Vice President

SEIU Healthcare Minnesota & Iowa represents over 50,000 health care workers, including over 20,000 self-directed homecare workers. HF4579 has two major provisions that will address the current health care workforce crisis. They will significantly improve the lives of health care workers and the people we serve.

Phillip Cryan
Executive Vice President

First, we strongly support the \$92 million rate increase for the PCA/CFSS programs in Article 2, Section 18. Every day our members see the cost of living and the wages at competing jobs increase, while their wages remain flat. This investment would allow workers to continue in homecare with more competitive wages. Whenever there is a rate increase for our home care programs, it is very important that workers can negotiate a contract. A contract makes sure the money goes to the workers. We are still clarifying some details about how this will work with the Department of Human Services, but we understand that this money would be bargained over and part of a contract.

Brenda Hilbrich
Executive Vice President

Rasha Ahmad Sharif
Executive Vice President

Second, and most importantly, we want to express our profound gratitude for including HF3405, the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board in Article 5, Sections 1-9, 25, and 26, along with the necessary appropriation. Minnesota has a workforce crisis that long pre-dates COVID-19. We think this crisis is caused in part by the lack of adequate opportunities for workers to have a say in setting industry workforce standards. Our nursing home members have repeatedly testified in person about their struggle to provide care during this crisis.

In addition, two other smaller provisions of Article 2 will have an outsized impact on homecare workers. Expanding PCA services to allow for driving will lift an unnecessary burden for both clients and workers. Expanding the number of hours parents and spouses can work will help alleviate the workforce shortage and recognize their valuable, if too often unrewarded, contribution.

Finally, we want to thank you for including two provisions in Article 15 from the Governor's Human Service budget bill that will fund and ratify two Memorandum of Understandings that were submitted to the LCC-SER.

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Sincerely yours,

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Rick Varco
Political Director

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