



Image description: Minnesota Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities logo

February 16, 2021

To: Chair Noor and Members of the Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy

Re: House File 2017, State Employment and Retention of Employees with Disabilities

Dear Chair Noor and Members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD) writes in support of **HF 2017**, which promotes the employment and retention of employees with disabilities in our state government workforce. MNCCD is a coalition of over thirty provider and advocacy organizations members, as well as many individual members who have disabilities.

Minnesotans often face difficult or even insurmountable barriers in both finding and maintaining employment. This includes employment with the state of Minnesota. As a result, the state does not have adequate disability representation in its workforce and, too often, policies that have a great impact on Minnesotans with disabilities are being decided by a small group of people who do not have disabilities. Minnesotans with disabilities need not only to be heard, but also to have a seat at the state table.

This bill aligns with MNCCD's values of individual empowerment and choice and accessibility, diversity, equity and inclusion. It is timely as it is a good step towards addressing the current workforces shortages that are impeding access to supports and services. HF 2017 centers the experiences of people who have a disability and increases disability employment and retention among the state government workforce by creating a pipeline of future leaders and policy makers in our state enterprise system and requiring more consultation with people with disabilities and disability employment experts. When Minnesotans with disabilities are making the decisions in our state agencies, the disability community in our state will be better served.

We you to support bill so that our state can be a model employer for people with disabilities and that state employees with disabilities have the support to serve the state of Minnesota as well as opportunities to lead our state agencies.

Sincerely,

Melissa Haley and Maren Hulden
MNCCD Policy Co-Chairs