



March 19, 2021

To: Members of the House Commerce Finance and Policy Committee  
RE: House File 1080

Dear Chair Stephenson and Committee Members,

We write in support of House File 1080, a bill to prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in eligibility for organ transplants. Thank you to Representative Richardson and co-authors for your leadership on this important bill.

The Minnesota Disability Law Center (MDLC) and the Legal Services Advocacy Project (LSAP) are statewide projects of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid. MDLC serves as the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) organization for Minnesota, and, along with every other state and territory, is the largest network of legally based advocacy services for people with disabilities in the United States. MDLC provides free legal services to children and adults with disabilities. LSAP is the advocacy arm of Legal Aid and has provided legislative and administrative advocacy on behalf of Legal Aid's clients and all low-income Minnesotans since 1977.

This bill addresses a serious issue that some of our clients who have disabilities have faced: being denied access to life-saving organ transplants because of their disability. Sometimes this happens as a result of a transplant team's determination that our client's disability prevents them from following treatment protocols, without considering reasonable accommodations or other existing supports that mitigate this concern. Other times, denials are based on stereotypical perceptions that the transplant cannot improve the quality of life of someone with a significant disability. In either case, the effect is to unfairly deny people with disabilities access to needed organ transplants comparable to that afforded to people without disabilities.

We believe this bill addresses an important issue and are grateful to the advocates and legislators who are bringing it to the attention of the legislature. We also appreciate the opportunity to provide technical assistance on the language and are available for any further questions. Thank you again to Representative Richardson for your leadership on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maren Hulden", is positioned above the typed name.

Maren Hulden  
Staff Attorney  
Legal Services Advocacy Project