January 30, 2017

Representative Nick Zerwas

433 State Office Building

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Zerwas,

AARP strongly supports your legislation to raise the income standards for people with disabilities and seniors (HF225).

Today, we have separate income standards for seniors depending on which program they qualify for and their level of care needs. For example, seniors who do not qualify for the Elderly Waiver program-- because they are not at risk of nursing home placement-- have to spend down to 80% of the poverty level to retain Medicaid. **This leaves many seniors without adequate resources to continue living independently in the community after meeting their spenddown.** Raising the income standard to 100 percent of poverty will help over 4,000 seniors.

This legislation will allows seniors to hold onto more of their Social Security income and go a long way in helping to keep older Minnesotans living in their homes and communities which is their preference. Additionally, your bill can save the state money too, as policies such as this can help reduce reliance on more expensive nursing home care.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. If you have further questions, please contact Mary Jo George, AARP’s Associate State Director of Advocacy at mgeorge@aarp.org

Sincerely,



Will Phillips

AARP State Director