



March 23, 2022

Representative Michael Nelson, Chair  
State Government Finance and Elections Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
St. Paul, MN 55103

**RE: HF 4036**

Dear Chair Nelson and Members of the Committee:

The Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging supports the Board on Aging's bill, House File 4036, introduced by Representative Ginny Klevorn to establish an aging focused legislative task force. We understand the charge is to study and report on the potential impact that an executive level department on aging would make to support the health and well-being of our exponentially growing older population.

Our six regional and one tribal Area Agency on Aging organizations deliver information, assistance and care coordination services directly to more than 50,000 older adults. We also support older adults by distributing scarce federal Older Americans Act resources to fund community partners that provide meals, rides, homemaker services, caregiver respite and other supports that help older adults maintain independence at home.

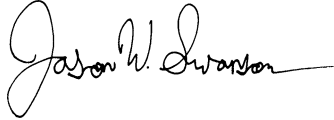
On a daily basis we work with older adults and their family caregivers encountering significant difficulty to plan for their own aging, use personal resources, tap charitable and government services, and most important, meet their needs when resources and services are simply not available. The latter is a growing issue as the population ages and as charitable and government resources decline for people who do not qualify for Medicaid or Minnesota's Medicaid Elderly Waiver program. The wait lists of the services we fund under the Older Americans Act program are growing. For example, we cannot meet the basic need for meals delivered at home for frail older adults, including those who are malnourished.

The Association supports HF 4306 for the visibility it could raise on issues of aging and for the potential it could create to unite state agencies and other stakeholders to better support older adults and family caregivers. Some outcomes could include greater efficiencies across federal and state funding programs, well-designed and executed processes to gather meaningful input from older adults and their families, and a united vision for the well-being of Minnesota's older adults.

Thank you for your advocacy on behalf of older adults. Hearing this bill is a step in the right direction to create a forum that elevates issues of aging. We encourage you to

consider adding a representative of Area Agencies on Aging and the MN Leadership Council on Aging to the composition of the proposed task force.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason W. Swanson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Jason Swanson  
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Cc: Susan Mezzenga, Chair, Minnesota Board on Aging