

May 2, 2024

Dear Chair Fischer, Chair Hoffman, and Members of the Human Services Policy Omnibus Conference Committee:

On behalf of ARRM and our more than 185 provider organizations, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of language included in both the House and Senate versions of the Human Services Omnibus Policy bills.

This session, ARRM brought forward many initiatives aimed at improving and streamlining services for people with disabilities, making policy adjustments to support workforce growth, and removing barriers that prevent people from getting the services they need when they need them and where they choose to receive them.

To that end, we are happy to see many of those proposals included in both the House and Senate's Human Services Omnibus Policy bills and would like to take this opportunity to highlight the sections of the bill that we are in particular support of.

Beginning with Article 1, sections 1 and 2, we want to thank the Chairs for including language exempting both 245D and 144G homes from municipal rental licensing requirements. These requirements are redundant to state and county requirements and can be used as a tool to discriminate against people with disabilities. By eliminating the ability for a city to require a rental license for these homes, you are helping to ensure that people have the right and choice to live in whatever community they want. There are slight differences in this language, we would suggest taking the Senate version of section 2.

We would also like to highlight the provisions in Article 1, sections 3 through 7. These important changes made within 245D make sensible changes to workforce qualifications for the Designated Coordinator, Designated Manager, and allowable job duties for 16 and 17-year-old staff while maintaining high safety standards. We greatly appreciate the conversations we have had with the Department and Chairs on the provisions included in sections 5 and 6, which will change the hiring requirements for Designated Coordinators and Designated Managers and the compromised language that we have been able to come to. These changes will support providers in hiring the right person for the job, not just the person that meets the qualifications listed in statute.

Finally, we want to express our support for Article 1, sections 15 and 16 of the Senate bill and Article 1, sections 11 and 12 of the House bill. The language in these sections sets clear timelines and parameters for the approval, or denial, of assistive technology in the support of people with disabilities.



ARRM has been a champion of the advancement and expansion of technology options for people with disabilities, and we are happy to see potential barriers and obstacles eliminated that could prevent or delay the review of technology requests.

Thank you again to the Chairs for the opportunity to provide comments on the Human Services Omnibus Policy bill, and for your thoughtful consideration of all the proposals ARRM brought forward this session. We are grateful for the leadership of both Chairs in developing meaningful policy changes that impact people with disabilities and their service providers. We look forward to working collaboratively as we move through the remainder of this session.

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