

House/Administration Offer #4, May 21, 2022, 4:15 PM

We appreciate our agreement on a policy-only HHS bill. Thank you for your partnership on that.

We remain frustrated that we have seen little movement from you toward a compromise on a spending bill. We share your interest in improving funding for nursing facilities, group homes, and other services for Minnesotans with disabilities. However, there are other critically urgent needs that also require our attention: child care, homelessness and deep poverty, preparing for future public health emergencies, and rebuilding the health care workforce. These have not been adequately funded in your offers.

This House/Admin offer moves more than halfway toward the Senate position. We have further increased the share of available resources going to group homes, nursing homes, and services for Minnesotans with disabilities and decreased the share for other urgent priorities. The total amount of investment towards long-term care in this offer exceeds \$615 million.

This offer includes the following key investments –

Workforce Revitalization: Investing in workforce incentives and rate increases for PCA services.

DWRS Rate Increase: Investing in rate increases for group homes and other providers of service for Minnesotans with disabilities. It uses more recent data to calculate annual inflationary adjustments. It also includes an extension of the current 5% temporary rate increase for group homes through the end of the calendar year, providing for automatic and immediate relief for group home providers.

Nursing Facilities Rate Increase: Investing in wage increases for staff in nursing facilities, providing for an average hourly wage increase of \$2.00 per hour.

Non-Emergency Transportation Rate Increase: Investing in even higher wage increases for NEMT drivers.

Elderly Waiver and Homemaker Services: Investing in rate increases for services provided to older adults and people with disabilities in the community.

Customized Living Services on the Disability Waivers: Extends impacts of the Elderly Waiver framework changes to customized living services paid for under the disability waivers.

Home Care Services: Investing in home care services with a 9% rate increase.

ICF/DD Services: Rate increase for services to people living in ICF/DD and a rate study for future system improvements.

Emergency Staffing Pool: Assistance to service providers in need of emergency staffing.

This offer also includes many other improvements to long term care, such as the enhanced PCA rate for people with high needs, increasing employment service rates, reducing the premiums for people on MA-EPD, and changing respite services to a market rate methodology.

Passage of a Health & Human Services budget this session will require compromise. Even after more than a week, the Senate's most recent offer still directs 82% of its spending to your starting point. This offer directs more than half of spending to those areas, while still funding the other critical areas. If the Senate is ever going to compromise and reach agreement, now is the time.