



February 26, 2024

The Honorable Peter Fischer
Chair, Human Services Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
551 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Debra Kiel
Republican Lead, Human Services Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
203 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Legal Aid Letter of Support for HF 3907 (SF 3840) – Own Home Services Provider
Capacity-building Grants**

Dear Chair Fischer, Lead Kiel, and Members of the Committee:

The Legal Services Advocacy Project and the Minnesota Disability Law Center write in support of HF 3907.

People with disabilities in Minnesota have the right to live in their own homes where they can receive services from a provider of their choice. Although this is the stated policy of our state, barriers remain for people to make the choice to live in their own homes. Not only is having people live in the most integrated setting the law, it is cost-effective. However, people choosing to live in their own homes do not always have the support necessary to do so.

Capacity-building grants for providers would strengthen resources and staffing, which is critical. The grants will provide incentives for providers who seek to support people who wish to move from more restrictive, congregate group settings to more integrated, individualized living. The grants will allow providers to try new approaches to doing this work. For example, the grants may allow providers to provide education and training to people with disabilities so they can

learn more about own home options, which is a critical first step. Moreover, the grants may be used to support people with disabilities to help pay for housing costs such as security deposits and moving expenses, which often serve as an initial barrier to a move to an own home. These and other innovate approaches are worthy uses of state resources that can lead to long-term cost savings and will help Minnesota live up to its obligations under *Olmstead v. L.C.* that people with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

Thank you for allowing Legal Aid to share its views on this proposal. We urge passage of HF 3907.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Purrington
Legal Director/Deputy Director
Minnesota Disability Law Center



Ellen Smart
Staff Attorney
Legal Services Advocacy Project

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