



March 18, 2024

Dear Members of the Human Services Policy Committee:

The Alzheimer's Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting people living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. We are writing today to share our support for HF 4839. This important legislation establishes a clear timeline for making Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) services available in Minnesota.

For seniors with complex medical needs, it can be very challenging to navigate a fragmented elder care system. In many cases, seniors receive a patchwork of services until they experience a medical crisis and it is necessary to seek more intensive care at a hospital or nursing home. PACE is a proven, interdisciplinary service that breaks this cycle and empowers seniors beginning at age 55 to live in the community. Despite the fact that all eligible PACE recipients qualify for a Nursing Home level of care, 95% choose to live in their home. This is possible because PACE offers a coordinated, team-based approach to elder care including medication management, transportation, and meals. This service is impactful for seniors with complex co-occurring medical conditions and, with an eligibility age of only 55, will be particularly important for those with early-onset dementia.

Last session, the legislature funded an actuarial study to develop a rate structure for PACE programs. This study was a necessary precondition to making PACE available in Minnesota and demonstrates that the PACE model holds real promise for elders seeking community-based alternatives to nursing home care. As the legislature reckons with an aging population and an overwhelmed elder care system, it is essential that we remain focused on the upstream interventions that support people in the community before more expensive and intensive treatment become necessary. With limited resources, we must continue moving forward with PACE services here in Minnesota. Please support HF 4839.

Sincerely,

Sam Smith
State Affairs Director
Alzheimer's Association