

Founded by parents of children with intellectual & developmental disabilities (IDD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota is a statewide, nonprofit advocacy organization that promotes and protects the human rights of people with IDD.

Alongside self-advocates, parents and family members, support professionals, and coalition partners, we work to advance policy solutions that create positive systems and social change for Minnesotans with IDD, and support public policies founded in the principles of human & civil rights, self-advocacy & self-direction, equity & belonging, and disability & racial justice.

## Expand Access to Inclusive Child Care (HF 668, Wazlawik)

Across Minnesota, parents of children with disabilities and medical complexities are struggling to access consistent, highquality, accessible child care. By creating grants for childcare providers to establish or expand inclusive settings, we can support them in meeting children's individual needs, alleviate constraints on the homecare workforce shortage, and allow parents to work during the day.

*Investing in grants for inclusive childcare will help ensure that children with disabilities receive support alongside their siblings and peers – resulting in long-term, positive benefits for all children, and building true belonging in community from an early age.*

## Help Students Recover Learning Lost During the Pandemic (HF 965, Edelson; SF 1210, Duckworth)

Despite the best efforts of teachers and staff, some students who have disabilities have experienced challenges during distance learning. They will need additional services and supports to address the ground they've lost during the pandemic and return to in-person learning with their peers. Schools and families need the chance to develop plans to address students' needs arising out of the pandemic, and schools need support to provide those additional services.

*Ensuring that students have access to individualized learning and skill rebuilding opportunities, based on their needs and challenges during the pandemic, will help ensure greater long-term success in their education.*

## Make Minnesota a Technology First State (HF 1347, Moller; SF 1092, Hoffman)

Many Minnesotans who have disabilities can build belonging in their communities with support from remote services and assistive technology - at school, in homes of their own, and on the job. More people need to know their right to use these innovative resources, which can offer the individualized supports they deserve and best leverage the direct support workforce.

*Creating a Technology First Policy Statement will help make sure that Minnesotans of all ages who have disabilities know about and use the remote supports and assistive technology that can help them reach their goals.*

## Strengthen Commitment to Employment, Inclusive Housing, and Self-Direction (HF 1347, Moller; SF 1092, Hoffman)

In 2020, Minnesota made a commitment to competitive, integrated employment, homes of individuals' choice, and self-directed supports for people who have disabilities. These Employment First, Independent Living First, and Self-Direction First policies are a good starting place, and need to be strengthened to help people have more control over their lives and build belonging in communities.

*Strengthening Minnesota's commitment to supporting people in competitive, integrated employment, homes of their own, and self-direction will help make sure that our system of disability supports respects individuals; choice and control.*

## Define Informed Choice for Minnesotans who have Disabilities & Their Families

(HF 1347, Moller; SF 1092, Hoffman)

For Minnesotans who have disabilities to take control of their services and supports, they must have access to all of the information they need to make decisions. This is called "informed decision-making". There has never been a shared definition nor formal process to promote and protect informed choice.

*Creating a definition of informed choice and an informed decision-making process will help people understand their rights and make sure that agencies and providers uphold these rights.*

## Stabilize Access to Personal Care Assistance (HF 663, Lippert; SF 497, Utke)

Minnesota's Personal Care Assistance (PCA) program is one of the most cost-effective Medicaid programs in our state, accessed by nearly 43,000 older adults and people who have disabilities statewide. However, low reimbursement rates and inadequate wages create instability for providers and force dedicated PCAs out of the field. Individuals lose their trusted, high-quality support professionals, and many have had to move into more costly institutional settings.

*Creating a data-driven rate framework and implementing program integrity measures can help improve the quality of Minnesota's PCA program and make sure its sustainability for us, our friends, family members, and neighbors who depend on it.*

## Create Person-Centered Supports During Hospitalization (HF 967, Acomb; SF 492, Utke)

Federal policy allows Personal Care Assistants and other Direct Support Professionals to provide support for people who have disabilities during short hospital stays. The Department of Human Services must work with stakeholders to create a plan that will give Minnesotans who have disabilities access to their direct support team while in the hospital.

*Creating a plan for Minnesotans who have disabilities to access direct support while in the hospital will help them get the individualized care they need, while creating more space and time in hospital staff's intense schedules.*

## Invest in Affordable, Accessible Housing Statewide

Affordable, accessible, inclusive housing options are critically important to ensure that individuals who have disabilities develop belonging in their communities. However, we know that people are struggling to find housing - especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*The Arc Minnesota supports the Homes for All Coalition policy and funding requests, that will help build and expand access to affordable, accessible housing statewide.*

With questions or for more information, contact Chief Program Officer Alicia Munson at [aliciamunson@arcminnesota.org](mailto:aliciamunson@arcminnesota.org)