



A Minnesota Collaboration for Changes in Older Adult Services

STATEMENT FROM THE LONG-TERM CARE IMPERATIVE ON THE LACK OF FUNDING FOR HERO PAY IN THE PRELIMINARY STATE BUDGET AGREEMENT

Today, with the announcement of a preliminary deal on budget targets by Governor Walz and House and Senate leaders, we learned that the budget will not include bonus pay for the caregivers who have served the older adults in nursing homes and assisted living during the pandemic with dedication and compassion.

A bill to provide hero pay, a one-time bonus payments to long-term care workers who logged at least 2,000 hours last year, received bipartisan public support from legislators during the session. However, based on the budget priorities announced today, the heroes of the pandemic are less important than remote connections for state workers or the bears at the Minnesota Zoo.

One component of the budget deal is to “set aside” funds for the Governor to use without any reference to the hero pay proposal; another component sets aside over a billion dollars of one-time COVID recovery money from the federal American Rescue Plan until at least the 2022 legislative session.

Expenditures for state agencies certainly deserve to be part of how our state spends the federal COVID response funds. But the 55,000 workers who cared for our seniors in nursing homes and assisted living do not deserve to be relegated to the list of “items which were considered” but not included in this year’s budget deal.

Workers providing senior care deserve our appreciation for the work they do daily. But COVID-19’s impact was unique and dangerous – the greatest threat to the health of Minnesota seniors in any of our lifetimes. With several weeks to go before the next special session, policymakers have an opportunity to direct one-time federal recovery money to these hardworking caregivers in recognition of their dedication and unprecedented sacrifices they made during the pandemic.

Care Providers of Minnesota
7851 Metro Parkway, Suite 200
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425
(952) 854-2844
www.careproviders.org

LeadingAge Minnesota
2550 University Avenue West, 350 S
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114-1900
(651) 645-4545
www.leadingagemn.org