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**STATEMENT FROM THE LONG-TERM CARE IMPERATIVE ON BUDGET SURPLUS**

***Portion Of Record-Breaking Surplus Must Be Used to Support Seniors and Their Caregivers***

(St. Paul, Dec. 6, 2022) - With a $17 billion budget surplus, state leaders have ample funding to secure the safety net of care for older adults. Our state leaders must invest in care to ensure access for all seniors in all the communities they call home.

Minnesota seniors and their families are waiting for the care they need because there aren't enough caregivers. In October alone, Minnesota's seniors were denied access to older adult services 11,000 times. Over half of long-term care providers have waiting lists for care.

The staffing shortage in senior care is at crisis level, affecting seniors and their families in every corner of the state. Only lawmakers can address the crisis to ensure access.

Minnesota's seniors have a right to care in their communities. We must do everything we can to attract caregivers to serve the growing population of Minnesota seniors. It's the state's responsibility to prioritize seniors and their caregivers with significant investment in senior care in the 2023 legislative session. In the 2023 legislative session, we will seek approximately $1 billion to support caregiver wages, which is less than 6% of the budget surplus. An investment of this size is necessary to address the significance of our caregiver shortage in our state.

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*The Long-Term Care Imperative (LTCI) is a partnership of Minnesota's two senior care provider associations –* [*Care Providers of Minnesota*](https://www.careproviders.org/) *and* [*LeadingAge Minnesota*](https://www.leadingagemn.org/)*. LTCI members employ 80,000 professional caregivers in Minnesota, meeting the needs of seniors in all the places seniors call home – including short-term care, assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing homes.*