



Senator Paul Gazelka Receives Public Official of the Year Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 18, 2019

CONTACT: Jodi Boyne
612.749.9758

SAINT PAUL – (Sept. 18, 2019) – LeadingAge Minnesota named Senator Paul Gazelka (GOP-Brainerd), its Public Official of the Year Award for his leadership in protecting funding for nursing homes and supporting new, comprehensive elder care protections.

The Public Official of the Year Award recognizes a public servant who went above and beyond the normal call for action and made a significant difference in long-term care.

A proposal during the 2019 legislative session would have cut nursing home funding by \$68 million, which would have reached \$200 million when including the loss of federal matching funding. Senator Paul Gazelka and his Senate Republican Caucus made it a priority to ensure this proposal did not advance and thereby mitigated the devastating impacts it would have had on nursing homes, seniors and caregivers across the state.

“The proposed change in cost-based reimbursement would have created financial instability for nursing homes, hampered their ability to recruit and retain skilled caregivers, and undermined access to the care and services seniors need – particularly in the rural areas of our state,” said Nancy Stratman, Chair of the LeadingAge Minnesota Board of Directors and Director of Senior Services and Cuyuna Range Medical Center-Care Center in Crosby. “With deep gratitude, we recognize Senator Gazelka for this ongoing support for stable, sustainable funding that invests in professional caregivers and helps ensure safe, quality care to Minnesota's elderly.”

LeadingAge Minnesota also recognized Senator Gazelka for his support of the Elder Care and Vulnerable Adult Protection Act of 2019, which provides greater clarity and transparency for consumers and their families, strengthens regulatory oversight and consumer protection, and maintains a model of senior living that supports consumer choice, options and the opportunity to age in place.

###

About LeadingAge Minnesota

Driven to transform and enhance the experience of aging, LeadingAge Minnesota is shaping future of aging services to ensure older adults in every community live with dignity, meaning and purpose. Together with more than 60,000 caregivers, our members provide quality services and supports to 70,000 older adults every day in independent senior housing, assisted living communities, adult day, in-home care and skilled nursing facilities.