

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Walz Administration's Budget Proposal Cuts Critical Support for Long-Term Care as Access for Seniors Dwindles

Governor Walz's budget proposal actively hurts Minnesota's seniors, who have earned their right to care.

ST. PAUL, MINN. – The biennial budget proposed by Minnesota Governor Tim Walz cuts critically needed assistance for Minnesota's long-term care community, Minnesota's seniors, and the incredible workforce who care for our aging population. Today's proposal is nothing short of a slap in the face to Minnesota's seniors, who are already facing a crisis in diminished access - particularly in rural Minnesota¹. This budget leads us to conclude that the Governor does not consider Minnesota's seniors a priority.

Despite the Governor's own recent admission that our state is aging and more Minnesotans are in need of services, his budget does not just leave our seniors and their caregivers out in the cold - it actively hurts their day to day lives. Under the proposal, nursing facilities would see a minimum 2% gap between the expenses they have already paid and what Minnesota will reimburse, effectively cutting payments to providers. This begs the question: Does a budget cut for long-term care services demonstrate fiscal responsibility when demand for said services is set to skyrocket?

The Long-Term Care Imperative recognizes that balancing the budget is more difficult now than in previous years, when lawmakers faced a significant budget surplus. But what has not changed is the crisis of care impacting thousands of Minnesota seniors and their families. 50,000 Minnesotans will turn 80 in the next five years, yet one third of nursing home beds have disappeared from rural Minnesota since 2005², and there are approximately 17,000 unfilled care positions among the long-term care providers that remain open.

This budget comes on the heels of the enactment of two new Administration mandates imposing over \$150 million in costs to Minnesota nursing homes, residents and their families. In addition to this gross oversight, the Administration is proposing thousands of dollars per year in new fees to Minnesota's Assisted Living community.

77% of Minnesotans agree that we are not ready for the aging boom and this budget reinforces that belief. This is a disappointing step backward for our seniors and their caregivers. It is time for Governor Walz to sound the alarm on the crisis in long-term

¹ [Center for Rural Policy and Development - The Declining Capacity of Nursing Facility Care in Rural Minnesota, Dec. 2024](#)

² [Center for Rural Policy and Development - The Declining Capacity of Nursing Facility Care in Rural Minnesota, Dec. 2024](#)

care, admit the state's shortcomings and include additional funding support in his administration's biennial budget. As lawmakers prepare for the 2025 legislative session, we encourage them to prioritize and protect state programs that provide financial assistance to seniors seeking long-term care services.

We look forward to working with lawmakers and our partners to find these solutions for Minnesota's seniors.

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The Long-Term Care Imperative is a collaboration of LeadingAge Minnesota and Care Providers of Minnesota, two of the state's largest long-term care associations. The Long-Term Care Imperative is committed to advancing a shared vision and future for older adult housing, health care and supportive services.

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