



Metropolitan Center for Independent Living

December 6, 2011

Joan Willshire
Minnesota State Council on Disability
121 E. 7th Place, #107
St. Paul MN 55101

Joan,

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of support for the Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD). Over the past years, MCIL has partnered with MSCOD in a variety of ways. Since 2001, MSCOD has provided leadership to Options Too, an effort to implement the 1997 Supreme County Olmstead Decision. MSCOD initiated these efforts by hosting meetings with disability and aging advocates, as well as holding conferences on nursing home relocation protocols for professionals. We have worked with MSCOD, and several other statewide agencies, to hold an annual Day at the Capitol, informing consumers about legislative and policy concerns, and encouraging them to meet with legislators/

MSCOD provides the distribution of important content and informational materials to Minnesotans with disabilities, with updated information that no other agency in the state does. MSCOD's Council members represent the entire state of Minnesota, proving grassroots information that can be used in forming policy and recommendations to the Legislature and Governor.

MSCOD is the state leader in emergency preparedness for people with disabilities, providing training throughout the state for consumers and community professionals. MSCOD developed a booklet for people with disabilities to use in planning for an emergency. No other agency or organization addresses this critical issue.

In addition, MSCOD staff are experts in areas important to people with disabilities, including disability parking and building (commercial and residential) accessibility. Such expertise is not found in other agencies.

Recognizing the need to economize, MCIL believes that elimination of MSCOD would leave a gap in services and knowledge critical to people with disabilities and those who work with them.

Sincerely,

David Hancox

David Hancox
Executive Director

1600 University Avenue West, Suite 16
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104-3834
(651) 646-8342 voice (651) 603-2006 fax
www.mcil-mn.org
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Pathways TO EMPLOYMENT

December 6, 2011

Sunset Advisory Commission
Representative Mary Kiffmeyer, Chair
Senator Terri Bonoff, Vice Chair
72 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155-1201

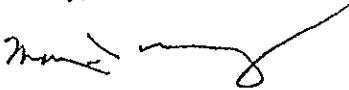
Dear Representative Kiffmeyer and Senator Bonoff,

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the work of the Minnesota State Council on Disability (Council). Since 2004, the Council has been a partner agency in Minnesota's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, Pathways to Employment (PTE). The mission of PTE is to increase competitive employment of people with disabilities and meet Minnesota's workforce needs by bringing together people with disabilities, employers, businesses, government and providers.

As part of the PTE collaboration, the Council engaged community members across the state on transportation issues related to community employment. Through these dialogues, the Council facilitated local solutions to transportation barriers for people with disabilities so that individuals can access activities in the community, including competitive work. The Council also worked with community employers on emergency preparedness; providing training on how to ensure employees with disabilities have a route to safety in the event of an emergency. As a neutral access point for information, the Council brings people with disabilities together with the community and resources to enhance independence, including competitive employment.

I fully support the efforts of the Minnesota State Council on Disability to collaborate, advocate, advise and provide information to expand opportunities, increase the quality of life and empower all Minnesotans with disabilities.

Sincerely,



MaryAlice Mowry
Director, Pathways to Employment

Minnesota Department of Human Services
540 Cedar Street | PO Box 64967
St. Paul, MN 55164-0967
(651) 431-2384 | MaryAlice.Mowry@state.mn.us

A comprehensive
strategy
to increase
competitive
employment of
Minnesotans
with disabilities
and meet
Minnesota's
workforce needs.

Minnesota Department
of Human Services
Minnesota Department
of Employment and
Economic Development
Minnesota State Council
on Disability



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Office of Transit
395 John Ireland Boulevard, Mail Stop 120
Saint Paul, MN 55155
Phone: 651-366-4800

Date: December 9, 2011

Joan Willshire
Executive Director
Minnesota State Council on Disability
121 East Seventh Place, Suite 107
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Support of the Minnesota State Council on Disability

Dear Joan:

I am writing on behalf of MnDOT to express our strong support for the work of the Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD).

The MSCOD has been a strong advocate for persons with disabilities in their role as a member of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access. The MSCOD has been a key member supporting the efforts to coordinate transportation services, thereby making the services more cost effective and available to a greater number of persons with disabilities.

The MSCOD has also convened Transportation Dialogues around the state on transportation issues for Minnesotans with disabilities. These dialogues brought the MSCOD and the Minnesota Department of Transportation together with consumers, disability advocates, service providers and employers to collaborate on strategies to meet the transportation needs of persons with disabilities within local communities.

The MSCOD also provides valuable technical assistance on accessibility and access issues to MnDOT staff who work with the Greater Minnesota public transit programs. State Council staff also provide expert guidance on accessibility requirements as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act an Public Law 504.

I hope that this information will be useful to the Commission in its deliberations.

Sincerely,

Tim Henkel
Assistant Commissioner

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Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

December 9, 2011

Sunset Advisory Commission
Representative Mary Kiffmeyer, Chair
Senator Terri Bonoff, Vice Chair
72 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155-1201

Dear Representatives Kiffmeyer and Senator Bonoff:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the work of the Minnesota State Council on Disability (Council). The Council has worked with the Continuing Care Administration in many respects including Options Too initiative. Their input is valuable on the Consumer Choices steering committee at other stakeholder committees representing persons with disabilities as well. The Council has always been open to these partnerships.

They have also been a leader within Minnesota in emergency preparedness and accessibility. The Council holds public forums which are also provide benefits when framing legislative topics and issues.

I fully support the efforts of the Minnesota State Council on Disability to collaborate, advocate, advise and provide information to expand opportunities, increase the quality of life and empower all Minnesotans with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Loren Colman
Assistant Commissioner
Continuing Care Administration



Homeland Security and Emergency Management

444 Cedar Street • Suite 223 • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-6223
Phone: 651-201-7400 • Fax: 651-296-0459 • TTY: 651-282-6555
<http://hsem.dps.mn.gov>

MEMO

DATE: December 9, 2011
TO: Members of the Sunset Commission
FROM: *KE* Kris Eide, Director, Homeland Security and Emergency Management
SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the Minnesota State Council on Disability

Disasters and emergencies happen every day in communities in Minnesota. The mission of the division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is to help Minnesotans plan and prepare for such disasters. We do this by coordinating the efforts of numerous state agencies that provide assistance and support for the people of Minnesota. We have partnered with the Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD) as a leader in working with people with disabilities and organizations that provide services and support for them. MSCOD embraces and promotes emergency preparedness in the disability community.

HSEM and MSCOD have worked together in a successful partnership for many years. After Hurricane Katrina wrecked havoc in the Gulf in 2005, the federal departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services held a conference on emergency planning for people with disabilities and seniors in 2006. The state team sent by Minnesota included representatives from HSEM, the Departments of Health and Human Services and MSCOD. Since that conference, a functioning cross-agency planning group has continued to meet in Minnesota to promote preparedness planning to disability groups, provide resources for emergency planners, and build awareness of the needs of people who have functional needs in time of disaster. Margot Indieke Cross from MSCOD regularly provides emergency preparedness training sessions to a variety of disability organizations and has co-taught breakout sessions at conferences for emergency managers and emergency responders in the past few years. MSCOD participates in the Emergency Planning and Preparedness Committee convened quarterly by HSEM with representation from all state agencies that have responsibilities assigned in the Minnesota Emergency Operations Plan.

MSCOD has also developed excellent printed materials to assist people with disabilities in planning for emergencies at home and at work. Through their partnership with DEED and DHS in Pathways to Employment, they developed an Employer Toolkit addressing emergency preparedness issues for people with disabilities in the workplace. Most recently, they have published "Emergency Preparedness: A Guide for People with Disabilities". They used information from the American Red Cross, FEMA, the National Organization on Disability, the National Fire Protection Association and the Minnesota Department of Health

Alcohol
and Gambling
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Emergency
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Security and
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Management

Minnesota
State Patrol

Office of
Communications

Office of
Justice Programs

Office of
Pipeline Safety

Office of
Traffic Safety

State Fire
Marshal





COURAGE
CENTER

December 8, 2011

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of Courage Center, I am writing today to express our support for the continued existence of the Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD) because of the important role this state agency plays in informing and empowering people with disabilities.

Courage Center, a comprehensive rehabilitation service provider serving more than 12,000 individuals with disabilities and complex medical conditions each year, relies upon the expertise, resources and services delivered by the MSCOD.

Over the years, MSCOD has narrowed and focused its mission to eliminate the overlap in services provided by other disability organizations in the community. Niche expertise in the area of accessibility regulations, from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to the state building code is a particular strength.

Emergency preparedness is another area of focus for MSCOD. The agency has hosted events and enlisted the support of other disability organizations to heighten the awareness of this important policy area, whether a pandemic requiring a comprehensive plan to address challenges at a population level, or a more focused effort such as a building evacuation.

As budgets have grown tighter and staff complements have shrunk, MSCOD remains a first call for help for many individuals who are new to the world of disability services and supports as the result of a new injury, accident, or other life-changing event. MSCOD serves as that link between individuals in need and the state government that oftentimes can help. We look forward to continuing our work with MSCOD in years to come, and we thank you for your consideration of our letter supporting its continued funding.

Sincerely,

Jan Malcolm
CEO

3915 Golden Valley Road
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55422

p: 763 588 0811

CourageCenter.org



**The MN Consortium for
Citizens with Disabilities**
800 Transfer Road, Suite 7A
Saint Paul, MN 55114
Phone: 651-523-0823 ext. 112
Fax: 651-523-0829
www.mnccd.org

December 6th, 2011

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MN-CCD), a statewide, cross-disability coalition of over 100 provider and advocacy organizations, we are writing today to express our support for the MN State Council on Disability (MSCOD). MN-CCD and our over 100 member organizations work together to improve the lives of Minnesotans with disabilities by addressing public policy issues. MSCOD plays the critical role of serving as the primary state resource to our coalition in our disability service policy work.

Here in Minnesota there is an incredible number of state workgroups that touch on disability issues. Legislatively mandated and/or DHS formed workgroups exist on topics ranging from the unique transportation issues experienced in rural Minnesota to the oral health services we offer our low income residents, along with everything in between. Disability advocacy stakeholder involvement in these workgroups is vital to their success, and therefore we at MN-CCD work hard to ensure representation in as many of these ongoing conversations as possible. As a community advocacy organization, we simply would not be able to comprehensively track these multiple opportunities for input and participation without MSCOD. Given their role as a state agency, MSCOD is able to keep us highly informed of opportunities for community disability stakeholders to assist these state sanctioned workgroups in successfully carrying out their work. Additionally, MSCOD has taken on a statewide leadership role in the specific areas of transportation and employment within the disability community, and we at MN-CCD benefit greatly from this leadership.

The disability advocacy community here in Minnesota is fortunate to have an organization such as MSCOD that serves as a bridge between the state activities being carried out around disability services and the community advocacy organizations made up of those who will ultimately be impacted by these activities. This bridge between the state and community is vital, particularly in the area of disability services where so many of the decisions about our complex services system are made at the state level. We look forward to continuing our work with MSCOD in years to come, and we thank you for your consideration of our letter of support regarding their existence.

Sincerely,

Steve Larson, Public Policy Director
The Arc of Minnesota
800 Transfer Road Ste. 7A
Saint Paul, MN 55114
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stevell@arcmn.org

Christopher Bell, Vice President
American Council of the Blind of MN
PO Box 7341
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Phone 612- 859-4938
christopherbell@comcast.net

December 6, 2011

Ms. Joan Willshire
Executive Director
Minnesota State Council on Disability
121 East Seventh Place, Suite 107
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Joan:

This letter is in support of the Minnesota State Council on Disability.

The State Council plays a unique and important role in raising public awareness regarding significant issues impacting Minnesota's disability community. The Council's work has particular relevance to Vocational Rehabilitation Service's mission to assist Minnesotans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living and community integration. For example, the Council provided leadership in the development of emergency preparedness training and materials for employers so they would be equipped to implement procedures necessary to ensure the safety of their employees with disabilities in the event of a disaster occurring at the workplace.

The State Council has also convened Transportation Dialogues around the state on transportation issues for Minnesotans with disabilities. These dialogues brought the Minnesota Department of Transportation together with consumers, disability advocates, service providers and employers to collaborate on strategies to meet the transportation needs of persons with disabilities within local communities.

The State Council also provides valuable technical assistance on accessibility and access issues. State Council staff provides expert guidance to employers on architectural accessibility as required by Americans with Disabilities Act and Public Law 504 as well as Minnesota's Human Rights Act. The State Council provides a 'one stop' for all Minnesotans with questions related to accessibility and access.

It is my hope that this input will be useful to the Commission in its deliberations. Please contact me directly if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Kimberley Peck, Director
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

cc: Commissioner Mark Phillips - Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Rehabilitation Services

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Toll Free: 800-358-9095 ■ Phone: 651-269-7366 ■ Fax: 651-297-5169 ■ TTY: 800-296-3900

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