

March 31, 2022
Support for HF 4036/SF 4309
Before the House Committee on State Government and Elections

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The MN Board on Aging has advised the Governor that the formation of this Legislative Task Force is the best step we, as a state, can take to begin to serve current and future elders and their families in Minnesota.

A Legislative Task Force will examine the necessity for a department on aging – it does not guarantee it. A Legislative Task Force will address the necessity for a statewide Plan of Action across all state agencies: efficient partnerships and investments with businesses and nonprofits, local governments and neighborhoods to ensure healthy aging.

This year, the state demographer has projected that:

- **MN will reach a milestone in 2023: 1 million people over the age of 65.**
- **In the next 8 years, 300,000 Minnesotans will be over the age of 75.**

Today, the highest percentage of aging adults live in greater Minnesota. *Legislators know* that their rural counties are experiencing aging earlier and more acutely than the metro area: **in 15 counties, the percentage of older adults ranks from 23% to 32% of their population.** (see *Rural MN Counties experience aging earlier, more acutely than metropolitan areas*)

This demographic shift is upon us today; it presents opportunities and challenges for legislative task force members who will consider the financial security, housing, transportation, health care, employment, and social service needs of our aging population.

A Legislative Task Force is a **first step** toward multi-decade planning and implementation that would be measurable and accountable to Minnesotans possibly through a department on aging.

A Legislative Task Force will address **critical questions** about the necessity for a built infrastructure for aging.

A Legislative Task Force is necessary because **we require a statewide MN Plan for Aging that will drive fundamental change in how we support Minnesota families.**

The MN Board on Aging does not have the capacity or authority to examine this question as thoroughly as it must be done by an impartial Legislative Task Force. The MN Board on Aging is convinced that the formation of this Legislative Task Force is the best step we, as a state, can take to serve current and future elders and their families in Minnesota.