



Minnesota Board on Aging
PO Box 64976
St. Paul, MN 55164-0976

March 20, 2023

House Human Services Finance Committee
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: HF2876 and SF2945

On behalf of the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), I am writing to ask for your support of HF2876/SF2945, a bill that requests permanent funding for the Native American Elders Coordinator position that was authorized by the MN Legislature and signed into law in 1995 (MN statute 256.975, subd. 6). This legislation was enacted without the appropriation needed to execute and fulfill the intended scope of the position. Almost 30 years later, it is even more critical for the MBA to have an elevated and independent position representing the board when engaging with Tribal leadership in order to adequately address the unique needs of Native American elders throughout Minnesota.

Specifically, the proposed Native American Elders Coordinator would play a key role in coordinating the development of a comprehensive and culturally appropriate statewide service system for Native American elders in partnership with Tribal leadership. It would lead the MBA's efforts to optimize the distribution of Older Americans Act funding to the 11 Tribal Nations for their elders residing on reservations and in urban areas. It would also provide education and technical assistance to support the efforts of Tribal Nations with improving service access and implementing culturally appropriate programs for their elders.

As Minnesota's State Unit on Aging, the MBA promotes policies to the state legislature, the Governor, and state agencies that accurately reflect the needs and interests of older Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Maureen Schneider'.

Maureen Schneider
Interim Chair, Minnesota Board on Aging

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