

## LSS 2019 Legislative Summary

The 2019 Minnesota legislative session started on January 3 with newly-elected DFL Governor Tim Walz, a DFL controlled House of Representatives with 40+ new members, and a Senate with a slim GOP majority. The legislature's focus this year was passing a two year (2020-2021) state budget.

Governor Walz, House Speaker Hortman, and Senate Majority Leader Gazelka committed to more openness and set early deadlines to meet the required May 21 end of session deadline. While bills moved forward during the earlier months, leadership was not able to agree on spending targets and adjourned on May 21 without an agreement. They returned on May 24 and completed the two-year budget during a special session.

Close to 6,000 bills were introduced this session, but only a couple hundred of those bills were given hearings and many fewer were passed into law. LSS' public policy priorities all received hearings in both the House and Senate, and most made it into the final agreement.

### LSS Supporter Engagement

- 120+ LSS employees, individuals who LSS supports, LSS Board members and volunteers met with legislators to advocate and educate legislators on LSS priorities.
- 9 LSS employees and one young person accessing youth services testified at 16 committee hearings.
- 60 LSS participants participated in Advocacy Bootcamp.
- LSS Advocacy team held 140 meetings with legislators.

### LSS 2019 Public Policy Priority Asks & Outcomes

**Best Life Alliance** takes steps to address the workforce shortage for Minnesotans with disabilities by restoring a destabilizing cut to community-based disability services and altering inflationary rate adjustments.

**PASSED:** 4.7% Competitive Workforce Factor added to the Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS) tool, Inflationary adjustments moved from every five years to every three years, using 30 month and 1 day old data. This adjustment means a state investment of \$34 million in 2020 and 202, \$30 million in 2022 and 2023, and represents about a 4% increase in DWRS rates.

**Value-Based Models** in community-based disability services promote effective approaches to housing, employment and integration. Identifying and analyzing these alternative payment models will help Minnesota improve the health of people with disabilities and lower costs.

**PASSED:** Direction and funding for DHS to study value-based models and outcome-based payments in disability services and to report recommendations to the legislature by October 1, 2020.

**Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS)** allow people to access Medical Assistance waivers to manage their services in the most self-directed way possible. Expanding awareness of CDCS will help people with disabilities and their families to take ownership of their services and result in more person-centered options.

**PASSED:** New language and funding allows for multiple people on CDCS to share staff if they choose.

**Homeless Youth Act** invests in youth experiencing homelessness, and offers support so they can transition to successful adulthood. The **Homes for All Agenda** advances investments in the full continuum of housing, from emergency shelter to affordable home ownership, that lead to housing stability for all Minnesotans.

**PARTIALLY PASSED:** \$3M additional funding for Emergency Shelter Grants, one-time \$5M increase to the Challenge Fund, \$3.5M base increase Homework Starts with Home, \$3.5M base increase Family Homeless Prevention & Assistance Program, \$1M Increase for Safe Harbor. No additional funding for Homeless Youth Act.

**LSS Minnesota Service C.O.R.E** ensures veterans and their families statewide can access financial counseling, housing stability, and behavioral health services in their community.

**PASSED:** \$250,000 /year ongoing increase for CORE Services.

**Say Yes and Invest** in mental health access and quality, by addressing the gap between the cost of service delivery and the rates so that Minnesotans can see a mental health professional when they need one.

**NOT PASSED**

**Student Loan Repayment Counseling** supports Minnesotans in getting on track with their student loan payments by developing a holistic plan to pay back their debt, and leading them to a healthy financial future that benefits our state economy.

**PASSED:** \$200,000/year ongoing funding for SLRC.

## **LSS Support Agenda**

**PASSED: Repeal Provider Tax Sunset.** The 2% provider tax was scheduled to sunset this year without legislative action. This would have resulted in a \$1b hole in the state's budget. The final agreement that passed included a continuation of a 1.8% provider tax

**PASSED: MFIP increase.** For the first time in 36 years the legislature passed an increase to the MFIP grant of \$100/month.

**NOT PASSED: DWRS Licensing Fees Increase.** The HHS bill did not include the provision that would have increased fees for providers.

**PASSED: Shelter-Linked Mental Health** is modeled after school linked mental health. Appropriates \$500,000 in one-time to allow community mental health providers to co-locate and provide mental health services to youth experiencing homelessness at the shelter.