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Media Release

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HCBS Providers Seek To Engage Officials On Workforce, Oversight

Association representing private Home and Community-Based Services providers responds to Legislative Auditor's report

SAINT PAUL, MINN. (02/23/2017) – Today, ARRM, an association representing over 200 direct care providers and supporting service providers for people with disabilities in Minnesota, responded to the Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor's report on Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Financial Oversight, thanking them for their work and affirming the industry's commitment to work with stakeholders on actions and strategies to address the findings in this report.

Amongst the findings, the report called attention to the state's growing workforce shortage in HCBS, citing demographic trends and low wages for direct care workers. The current rate setting system does not easily accommodate considering the skill level needed to care for clients when it determines wages, nor does it account for the cost of state and federal regulations or the additional costs providers are incurring by paying overtime to make up for staffing shortages.

"We are pleased the Legislative Auditor chose to address the workforce shortage, as this is the most pressing issue for Home and Community-Based Services," said Cheryl Pray, ARRM CEO. "The recommendations for more regular study of workforce needs and direct care wages will serve us well down the road, although ARRM has the data now that shows we need to take action."

The report focused on the Minnesota Department of Human Services' oversight of HCBS spending and providers, recommending the state institute a set of financial reporting requirements and increase regulations over HCBS providing care in people's own homes. These recommendations were focused on providing more transparency and clarity on providing better services to people with disabilities in Minnesota.

"We look forward to partnering with DHS and the State Legislature to address the issues raised in the report," said Pray. "ARRM prides itself in representing the best in the business when it comes to providing services to people with disabilities and putting their interests first. Our goal is to support the network of services that help people achieve their goals, and ensure regulations provide adequate safeguards and oversight."

ARRM has already introduced a set of policy reforms to help address some of the workforce shortage issues, such as excessive background check wait times and over regulation of how friends and family interact with people with disabilities (SF 359 / HF 696). The Association is also actively working with legislators to identify additional reforms to set the state on a sustainable course for the future.

About ARRM (The Association of Residential Resources of Minnesota)

ARRM is a nonprofit association of more than 200 Minnesotan providers, businesses and advocates dedicated to leading the advancement of community-based services that support people living with disabilities in their pursuit of meaningful lives. ARRM members support people with developmental, intellectual and physical disabilities including autism, brain injury and

mental health needs. People served live in their own homes, adult foster care settings, and other community settings. Founded in 1970, ARRM continues to lead positive industry reforms that support Minnesotans with disabilities. To learn more, visit arrm.org, and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).