



ARRM

*ARRM leads the advancement of
community-based services that
support people with disabilities in
their pursuit of meaningful lives.*

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News Release

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November Budget Forecast Statement

Billion dollar surplus can address disability services workforce shortage

South St. Paul, Minn. – With the announcement of a \$1.4 billion forecasted budget surplus for the fiscal year 2018-19 biennium, ARRM CEO Cheryl Pray released this statement today:

“The projected state budget surplus announced in today’s forecast from the Minnesota Office of Management and Budget offers an opportunity for legislators, Governor Dayton and our state to correct a significant oversight from the last biennium – the critical underfunding of services and supports for people with disabilities and their staff.

“ARRM and its members are committed to ensuring the state meets its commitment to citizens with disabilities that they will have the same rights and opportunities as all Minnesotans: to lead fulfilling lives of their choosing. This begins with addressing the critical workforce shortage in our industry – more than 8,700 positions went unfilled in the disability services industry in 2015 – and giving a raise to the more than 100,000 direct support professionals (DSPs) in Minnesota who make an average wage of barely \$12.00 per hour.

“Minnesota cannot meet its commitment if these steps are not taken.

“This is a bi-partisan issue free of the political baggage of so many other ‘top priorities’ for lawmakers. During the 2016 Legislative Session, 116 legislators, a majority in both the State House and State Senate, sponsored a bill increasing the wages for DSPs by five percent. That strong support, along with a \$1.4 billion projected surplus, stabilizing economy and the desperate need for action should make this a must-pass for legislators and the Governor in 2017.”

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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](#).