Public Comment will be received by the Minnesota Board on Aging for 30 days beginning April 3, 2023, on the State Register, [on the MBA website](https://mn.gov/board-on-aging/state-plan-on-aging/index.jsp), MN Board on Aging, PO Box 64976, St. Paul, MN 55165, or email to: [mba.dhs@state.mn.us](mailto:mba.dhs@state.mn.us)

Dear Kari Benson, Executive Director of the Minnesota Board on Aging and Minnesota Board on Aging Board,

As a [member/representative] of [Your Organization], I am writing to express our concern for the equitable distribution of funding for aging services in Minnesota. We urge you to use your public comment period beginning April 3, 2023, to support an Intrastate Funding Formula (IFF) that is fair to older adults living in rural areas.

According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, rural areas in Minnesota have a higher concentration of older residents than urban areas. These older adults face unique challenges such as limited access to services and resources, including meal delivery programs, transportation, health care and technology. Inadequate services can have a negative impact on their health and quality of life and contribute to rising healthcare costs.

The current formula favors the 7-county metro region, leaving programs that provide rural services to older adults severely underfunded. The proposed changes to the Minnesota Intrastate Funding Formula do not meet the needs of older adults living in Greater Minnesota and could result in the loss of critical Older Americans Act-funded programs, greater population migration to the metro area due to lack of support services in rural communities, and increased admissions to long-term care settings.

At [Your Organization], we serve [description of the population you serve in rural areas] and have seen firsthand the need for equitable investment in aging services. We implore you to prevent cuts to vital services for seniors in Greater Minnesota by adjusting the IFF factors and weights. We recommend that the formula be weighted as follows: 20% for population 60+, 5% for 60+ with disability, 20% for 60+ low income, 15% for 60+ minority, 25% for 60+ rural, 5% for 60+ population density, and 10% for 60+ living alone. We also recommend that the IFF factors and weights be formally evaluated at least every 10 years.

Most rural older adults would like to age in place, but they face significant challenges in doing so. Equitable investment of the Older Americans Act funding is important as rural areas are aging faster than urban areas yet are underrepresented in the proposed Intrastate Funding Formula draft. We believe that it is crucial to ensure that older adults in rural areas have access to the services and supports they need to age with dignity and independence.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please feel free to contact me at [Phone number, email] if you have any questions or if there is anything further we can do to support this important issue.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Your job title and organization information if affiliated]