March 27, 2019

Members of the MN Congressional Delegation
Washington, DC

Dear Congressional Delegation Member,

A key constituent in providing health and long-term care to older Minnesotans are Liberians living in the U.S. These direct service professionals provide critical services in many communities in your district. They are living in the U.S. under the Deferred Enforced Departure, or DED program, which, as you know, does not provide a path to citizenship. Approximately 45% of the estimated 35,000 Liberians in Minnesota work in a health care or home care setting.

Since the administration of George H.W. Bush, Liberians have held this protected status, allowing them to remain in the U.S. without fear of being sent back to Liberia. On March 27, 2018 the administration announced it would end the DED program for Liberians on March 31, 2019.

This policy change will **detrimentally impact care for older Minnesotans** in our communities. Already there are 15 open positions for every 1 job seeking health care worker. Liberians make up approximately 6% of long-term care workers further exacerbating the workforce shortage issue should the DED expire. Some Minnesota health care settings will lose up to 25% of their workforce.

MNLCOA asks you to **advocate with the administration** to allow Liberians to remain in the U.S. to participate in our health care workforce.

Further, MNLCOA urges Congress to **work for a long-term solution** for Liberians living in Minnesota who provide vital services to older adults in our communities.

Please contact me at rajean@mnlcoa.org or (651) 235-0346 with questions or to further engage MNLCOA in this important work.

Sincerely,

Rajean Paul Moone, Ph.D.
Executive Director