A bill for an act

relating to human services; specifying criteria for communities for a lifetime; requiring the Minnesota Board on Aging and the commissioner of employment and economic development to develop recommendations on the designation of communities for a lifetime; requiring a report; amending Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 256.975, by adding a subdivision.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 256.975, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 10. **Communities for a lifetime.** (a) It is the policy of the state of Minnesota to respect and value the past, current, and future contributions to society by our senior residents. Further, the state of Minnesota recognizes the ongoing importance of seniors to the state's economic development. In anticipation of the extensive growth in the number of senior residents who will reside in Minnesota and in anticipation of their increasing life expectancies, it is the policy of the state of Minnesota to develop communities for a lifetime with the capacity to offer a welcoming environment to these senior residents, recognizing them as assets to our state.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, "communities for a lifetime" means municipalities, statutory or home rule charter cities, or towns, whose citizens seek to affirmatively extend to persons ages 65 and older the opportunities, supports, and services that will enable them to continue to be contributing, civically engaged residents.

(c) The opportunities extended to senior residents by communities for a lifetime must include, but are not limited to:

(1) the opportunity to contribute time and talents through volunteer community service;

(2) the opportunity to participate in the paid workforce, with flexibility of hours and scheduling;

(3) the opportunity for socializing, recreation, and wellness activities, including both physical exercise and mental stimulation;

(4) the opportunity to "age in place" and choose among a variety of affordable, accessible housing options, including single-family housing, independent congregate senior housing, and senior housing with services;

(5) the opportunity to access quality long-term care in the setting of the senior's own choice; and

(6) the opportunity for community-wide mobility and to access public transportation, including door-to-door assistance and weekend and evening access.

(d) The supports and services made available to senior residents by communities for a lifetime must include, but are not limited to:

(1) an array of home and community-based services to support seniors' options to remain in an independent living setting as they age and become more frail;

(2) access to contemporary remote medical technology for cost-effective home-based monitoring of medical conditions;

(3) access to nutrition programs, including congregate meal and home-delivered meal opportunities;

(4) access to a comprehensive caregiver support system for family member and volunteer caregivers, including: (i) technological support for caregivers remaining in the paid workforce to manage caregiver responsibilities effectively; and (ii) respite care that offers temporary substitute care and supervision for frail seniors;

(5) personal assistance in accessing services and supports, and in seeking financing for these services and supports;

(6) high-quality assisted living facilities within a senior's geographic setting of choice;

(7) high-quality nursing care facilities within a senior's geographic setting of choice; and

(8) the protection offered to vulnerable seniors by a publicly operated adult protective service.

(e) Communities for a lifetime must also:

(1) establish an ongoing local commission to advise the community for a lifetime on its provision of the opportunities, services, and supports identified in paragraphs (c) and (d);

(2) offer training and learning opportunities regarding guidelines for interacting with seniors for businesses, civic groups, fire and police personnel, and others frequently interacting with seniors;

(3) include in their comprehensive plans provisions addressing the offering of the opportunities, supports, and services identified in paragraphs (c) and (d);

(4) consider the impact of municipal budgets and the creation or modification of existing programs on senior residents and the community's ability to maintain its status as a community for a lifetime.

(f) The Minnesota Board on Aging, in cooperation with the commissioner of employment and economic development, shall establish a task force to explore issues related to communities for a lifetime. The task force must include between 15 and 25 representatives of: rural, suburban, and urban communities; associations of these communities; seniors ages 65 and older; and civic and nonprofit organizations with the capacity and competency to engage and meet the needs and interests of senior residents. The task force shall develop recommendations for a process under which a community would be able to formally request and receive designation as a community for a lifetime that offers to resident seniors ages 65 and older the opportunities, services, and supports identified in paragraphs (c) and (d). The task force shall present its recommendations to the Minnesota Board on Aging and the commissioner of employment and economic development by January 31, 2010. The board and the commissioner of employment and economic development shall transmit these recommendations, along with comments and any draft legislation necessary to implement communities for a lifetime, to the legislature by February 28, 2010.