



IOWA HELPING COMMUNITY POLICY GROUP TESTIMONY BEFORE
CONGRESSPERSON CINDY AXNE, JUNE 7, 2021
CAREGIVER ROUNDTABLE

Anne Discher, Executive Director, Common Good Iowa

Thank you, Representative Axne, for shining a light on the important role of paid and unpaid caregivers in our state. My name is Anne Discher, and I'm executive director of Common Good Iowa. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and advocacy shop promoting policies that advance opportunity for all Iowans. I'm here today on behalf of the Iowa Helping Community Policy Group.

We are a new-ish and growing coalition of caregivers, those they serve, and those who value them. We advocate for state and federal policies to better support and invest in the caregiving fields – which we define fairly broadly to include those providing direct care to seniors, children and adults with disabilities, caring for children while their parents work, and conducting public health outreach, counseling, and home visiting to vulnerable populations.

- We strongly support the Biden Administration's proposed federal infrastructure investments – over \$800 billion over ten years in the American Jobs Act and the American Families Act— and we are looking to our Congressional delegation to lead on this agenda.
- This is about both better meeting the needs of the people in need of care and acknowledging the helping workforce as a core part of our state's infrastructure—and key to economic prosperity. Caregivers are the workforce behind the workforce.

- Better supporting caregivers is also an important part of a gender and racial equity agenda because women and people of color — women of color, in particular — are overrepresented in these fields.
- We also advocate for better supporting Iowans who are caring for family members and friends. We endorse family leave and tax policies that recognize that many of them are foregoing paid work—and income — to do so.
- This summer Common Good Iowa, in conjunction with the Helping Community Policy Group, will be releasing a policy brief on this workforce and its contribution to Iowa's economy. We look forward to sharing it with you.

Thank you.