



Lighthouse Child & Family Services

3/21/22

RE: CTSS in MN

Dear Chair Schultz and Chair Abeler,

I am the owner and Executive Director of Lighthouse Child & Family Services. We provide mental health services to rural areas in Region 7E in Greater MN. (Including, but not limited to Mille Lacs County, Kanabec County, Isanti County, Chisago, and Benton County.) I embarked on the journey to start my own group practice in 2008. My intention and passion was to serve rural families in a way that was meaningful to them and allowed them to improve their quality of life with regard to mental wellness.

Since 2008 we have served over 3,000 clients/families. Over the course of our tenure in this industry we have experienced significant increases in administrative responsibilities within CTSS without any increase in reimbursements. This has had an undeniable negative impact on our ability to recruit and retain staff with competitive wages. Given the majority of the infants, children and adolescents we serve qualify for CTSS, many staff leave to provide mental health services to higher functioning persons that don't qualify for CTSS services. This leaves our already underserved communities with even less opportunities for access to mental health services. Many of our Region 7E community members live within lower socioeconomic status, suffer from multi-generational trauma, experience barriers to technology, transportation, employment and unfortunately many find themselves involved in the child protection system. Our families need need more support.

During these unprecedented pandemic times we have to turn many people of all ages away weekly who are seeking mental health services. In order for Lighthouse Child & Family Services to continue to grow to meet the needs of our communities, especially now, we need to be able to focus on providing a quality service vs. ongoing changes in documentation and overregulation. Given these facts, all 44 staff of Lighthouse Child & Family Services support HF3738/SF3690. It is more Important, now than ever, to ensure we can provide support and services to our families to allow for the best life outcomes for each person who seeks services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Hanenburg

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Owner/Executive Director

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