



Senator John Marty, Chair  
Finance Committee  
April 17, 2023

Chair Marty and Finance Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW - MN) and the MN Coalition of Licensed Social Workers (Coalition of Social Workers), we are writing in support of several components in SF 2995.

NASW - MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state, representing over 2000 social workers. The Coalition of Social Workers unifies membership organizations for licensed social workers. Collectively, we work as mental health professionals, in child welfare systems, nursing homes, health care, home care settings, and residential care.

We appreciate a number of provisions in this bill. Specifically:

- Article 1, Section 37: Implementing a temporary bridging rate increase for outpatient MA and MinnesotaCare services, allowing clinicians to serve the mental health needs of the most vulnerable Minnesotans with fair payment while we wait for a more permanent solution.
- Article 2, Section 8: Extending the eligibility of audio-only communication and parity for telehealth. This eliminates barriers vulnerable populations face while attempting to access mental health services.
- Article 5, Section 7 and 15, Article 9, Section 1: Supporting workforce development activities focused on recruiting, supporting, and training for mental health practitioners and professionals from diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic communities. People seeking mental health support deserve the highest quality of care, and that includes the option to choose among professionals who share their identity and lived experiences.
- Article 4, Section 61: Establishing a system for stable funding for the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline through a telecom fee. Our community is best served by a whole-person approach to health that includes emergency mental health support for those in crisis.
- Article 9, Section 9: Establishing a crisis response program for youth and families to reduce out of home placements.

We appreciate the work of the Health and Human Service committee, and anticipate fruitful discussion in the coming weeks about specific approaches to the general concepts supported in this bill.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director  
NASW-MN

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Chair  
Coalition of Social Workers

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