

February 15, 2023

RE: Written testimony in support of the MinnesotaCare Public Option (SF49)

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jeremy Messersmith. I'm a songwriter from Minneapolis. I frequently sing about kittens and I'm writing to support the MinnesotaCare Public Option (SF49).

I've lived in Minnesota for over 20 years. It's my home and creative hub. I spent my early 20's slinging coffee during the day and playing open mics at night. For a few of those magical years I qualified for Minnesota Care which, to this day, is the best health insurance I've ever had and why I support this bill.

Making art is fun. Making a living making art is a challenge. As an artist my income varies greatly from year to year. This makes budgeting for health care extremely difficult, especially if you're someone like me who has consistently used the health care system for chronic conditions or the occasional collapsed lung. For years I've been enrolled in Bronze or Silver level plans, paying between \$7,000-\$10,000 per year in deductibles, premiums, and out-of-pocket costs.

I've had countless conversations with fellow artists who have been forced to curtail or abandon their pursuits, not because of a lack of financial viability but simply because they could not afford healthcare for themselves and their families.

Minnesota has a history of supporting the arts and culturally we box far above our weight class. Our ecosystem gave us Dylan, Prince, and Dossa- why artists like Nirvana and Lizzo have done creative work in our state. That's a legacy to be proud of and I hope we can build on it today.

Thank you,

Jeremy Messersmith
Minneapolis, MN