



Minnesota Hospital Association

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Submitted Electronically

Chair Wiklund and members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) we write in support of SF 1174 (Morrison) and its many provisions that would help reinforce access to desperately needed home, community, and residential mental health services for children and families.

MHA supports strengthening the continuum of care and funding the development of placement options for children boarding in hospitals, including improvements to the Mental Health Innovation Grant Program as well as expanding capacity and allowing specialization of Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs). Hospitals and health systems across the state are continuing to experience a significant increase in the number of children and teenagers seeking mental health care in hospitals. While often they need an inpatient bed, frequently they do not meet inpatient admission standards and therefore many of these children end up boarding in the emergency departments.

A survey conducted by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) in August-September 2022 found there were 37 children currently boarding in hospitals at that time. The DHS survey also found that of all the children presenting with mental health needs at hospitals, 12% of them ended up boarding, with 65% of the boarders staying in the emergency department. By improving the Mental Health Innovation Grants and expanding access to PRTFs, mental services for children and adolescents can be better provided in the most appropriate care setting that is best for the patient and their family.

We also support provisions in SF 1174 related to providing Medical Assistance coverage for care coordination and enhancing transition support services, dedicating resources to capacity building and staff training for intensive in-home care and investing in culturally responsive school-linked mental health services and early childhood mental health services and consultation.

MHA is grateful to Senator Morrison and the Committee for their efforts to help strengthen the mental health continuum of care and to provide needed mental health care supports for Minnesota children and families. Please support SF 1174.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

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