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March 22, 2023

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

We are writing to share our support and comments on SF 2995, the Governor's health budget bill. The Mental Health Legislative Network has worked together this year on several bills and we're grateful for the attention given to those bills and those included in the Governor's budget.

One of our top priorities this year is establishing and funding 988 in our state law. The new federal number for the suicide prevention lifeline is an easy to remember number that has already increased access to life saving supports for Minnesotans. With the introduction of the number, Minnesota's call centers have seen a significant uptick in the number of calls, texts, and chats. With our current resources we are not able to respond locally to chats and texts. We must sustainably fund and expand this service to continue to build our mental health system in Minnesota. The language in this bill creates a telecom fee similar to how we pay for 911 services. This is a critical part of supporting people who are struggling with difficult thoughts, all the way to building our larger crisis response system to provide professional, appropriate, non-police responses to people in a mental health crisis.

These are some of the other provisions in the bill that we support:

- \$2,790,000 in each of the two years for adolescent mental health promotion;
  - Community Mental Well-Being for mental health resources and post-COVID-19 recovery and healing for communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19;
  - \$1,000,000 each of two years for mental health for health care professional grants
  - Sentinel Event Review Committee regarding police involved deadly encounters and community advisory committee.
  - Awarding health professional training site grants to eligible practitioners to augment existing clinical training for rural and underserved populations;
  - Increasing developmental and social emotional screening of children;
  - Grants to implement model jail practices to support children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers;
- and

Thank you for your work on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Sue Abderholden, MPH  
Executive Director

Elliot Butay  
Senior Policy Coordinator