

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

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March 23, 2023

The Honorable Melissa H. Wiklund
Minnesota State Senate
95 University Avenue W., Room 2107
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Kelly L. Morrison
Minnesota State Senate
95 University Avenue W., Room 3205
St. Paul, MN 55155

Subject: SF 1679 by Senators Wiklund and Morrison

Dear Senators Wikund and Morrison,

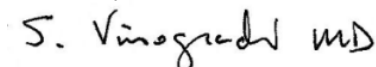
As Chair of the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at the University of Minnesota, I write this letter to express my strongest possible support for Senate File 1679 and to thank you for your authorship of this bill to expand and establish programs to address the worsening health and human services workforce shortage.

There is a significant shortage of psychiatrists throughout Minnesota and the entire region, seriously jeopardizing the well-being and long-term health and functioning of our children, youth, and adults of all ages. This bill, and the ability it provides to expand our psychiatry residency training program at the university, will help to alleviate the workforce shortage. My department is whole-heartedly committed to training medical students and residents to become highly engaged clinical providers who are prepared to serve a wide range of individuals with mental health needs with sensitivity, compassion, and rigorous excellence.

Our mission is to create psychiatric experts and leaders for Minnesota and beyond. This bill's funding will allow the University of Minnesota Medical School to train up to two additional psychiatry residents in our department each year. Indeed, thanks to the predecessor of this bill, we have already trained six additional psychiatrists and added them to the Minnesota workforce – people whom we never would have been able to add to our training program without the support of these funds.

As our track record so far indicates, investment in additional training positions in our department's residency training program through this bill creates significant short-term and long-term improvements in the mental health workforce shortage in Minnesota. Advancing this bill will dramatically help to increase the next generation of psychiatric experts that our state and our country so desperately need as we navigate the uncertain times ahead.

Sincerely,



Sophia Vinogradov, M.D.
Professor and Department Head
Donald W. Hastings Endowed Chair
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
University of Minnesota Medical School