



March 29, 2022

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Health and Human Services
Room 1100, Senate Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee:

Minnesota's Prenatal to Three Coalition (PN-3) writes in support of SF 49 DE1, to improve affordability and access to healthcare. Thank you for prioritizing the health and wellbeing of Minnesota's youngest children in this bill. The PN-3 Coalition believes public investments aimed at supporting healthy growth and development will positively position children and families for a lifetime of prosperity.

The PN-3 urges you to consider the provision below and support SF 49 DE1:

Continuous Eligibility for Medical Assistance for Children 0-6 Article 1. Sec. 5. Subd. 7 & Line 4.8

This provision ensures babies and young children already enrolled in Medicaid will maintain consistent and predictable access to healthcare during their first six years of life. Without access to healthcare, young children may be unable to receive check-ups, early developmental screenings or engage in early interventions services needed to address health concerns or correct developmental delays. Continuous eligibility for children is needed to improve long-term health outcomes and mitigate the more expensive costs associated with unknown or untreated health concerns.

Over 80% of brain development occurs before the age of six and this growth and development is the foundation for all future physical, cognitive and emotional learning. Consistent access to healthcare allows for more predictable and better quality of care that improves lifelong health outcomes, mitigates developmental delays, supports health equity and lowers the burden on families to reapply for health insurance.

Please join us in supporting SF 49 DE1 to ensure that Minnesota's youngest children have a strong start in life.

Thank you,

Deb Fitzpatrick,
Children's Defense Funds-MN,
Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
West Central Initiative,
Co-Chair

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn,
MN Prenatal to Three (PN-3) Coalition,
Coalition Coordinator