

March 31, 2023

Sen. Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Senate Health & Human Services Committee
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2107
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Wiklund and committee members,

The Minnesota Dental Hygienists Association (MnDHA) would like to thank you and your committee members for your ongoing commitment to the oral health of all Minnesotans and your ongoing focus for those individuals who rely on our public health programs for their dental care. Specifically, there are number of items in your proposed omnibus health and human services budget bill (S.F. 2995) that the MnDHA enthusiastically supports, including:

Expanded Adult Dental Benefit: The MnDHA strongly supports the proposal to reinstate a comprehensive dental benefit set for non-pregnant adults. Access to oral health care is essential to public health and the cuts to the dental benefit set in the early 2000's was a major step backward. This proposal is long overdue and greatly appreciated.

Additions to Rural Health Advisory Committee: The MnDHA strongly supports the language previously before this committee which would add an allied dental professional to the Rural Health Advisory Committee. We believe strongly that the voices of dental hygienists and dental therapists are an important part of any discussion about access to care, particularly as we seek to increase access to oral health care in rural communities, most of which have a shortage of dental professionals.

Rebasing the Medical Assistance Rate Schedule: The MnDHA supports the language in S.F. 2995 that would transition the Medical Assistance fee-for-service rate schedule from one stuck in the 1980's to one that is based off modern cost data. This will help ensure reimbursement decisions going forward are better aligned with the cost of providing care.

The MnDHA greatly appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the omnibus health and human services budget bill and looks forward to collaborating on oral health issues as the legislative session progresses.

Respectfully,

Carol Dahlke, MSDH
President
Minnesota Dental Hygienists Association
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