



A collaboration among the University of Minnesota,
University of Minnesota Physicians and Fairview Health Services

March 5, 2024

Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee

Dear Chair Klein and Committee members,

On behalf of M Health Fairview, we are writing in support of Senate File 3532, which makes key reforms to current prior authorization requirements that will improve access to care for the patients we serve across our health system.

M Health Fairview is a partnership between Fairview Health Services, the University of Minnesota Physicians and the University of Minnesota Medical School collectively serving more than two million patients annually. Across our footprint of academic and community hospitals, primary and specialty care clinics, and the more than 3,000 providers in our health system, we offer our patients access to the latest techniques and advances in medicine - when and where they need it. Our patients trust us to provide the highest quality health care - from routine primary care visits for their children to breakthrough clinical innovations for the most complex rare diseases.

Far too often, the burdensome prior authorization processes put in place by health insurers impacts the patients we serve by delaying their care and in some instances causing negative impacts on patient health and outcomes. This issue is particularly severe for many of the patients we serve who are navigating serious health issues like substance abuse disorder, mental health challenges and adult and pediatric cancers – all of which require timely access to care.

A recent experience shared by one of our oncology providers highlights the need for the prior authorization reforms in this bill. A family had come to one of our pediatric clinics following a cancer diagnosis in their adolescent child and our testing confirmed the need to start this child on an urgent course of treatment. Over the course of almost a month, our teams attempted to work with this family's Medicaid managed care insurer to get the provider-recommended, evidence-based chemotherapy treatment plan approved so treatment could begin. For two weeks the insurer refused to make a determination of medical necessity on the first recommended treatment. As a result, our provider team was forced to change the treatment recommendation for this family, only to be told that prior authorization for the new course of treatment would take an additional 10-14 days. It wasn't until more than a month had passed that our care team and the family was able to work through these barriers so this adolescent child could begin getting their cancer treated. Unfortunately, this is just one of hundreds of similar stories illustrating why this legislation is critical for patients and families across Minnesota.

This legislation also plays an important role in helping reduce the administrative burnout of our providers. Our care teams are forced to spend increasing amounts of time on administrative tasks like prior authorization just to ensure that our patients can get the safe and high-quality care they need for their medical conditions. Passing this legislation would be a major step in helping to improve job satisfaction and reduce provider burnout across our health care system by allowing our clinical care teams to focus where they are needed most – caring for patients.

mhealthfairview.org





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On behalf of all the patients who entrust our providers with their care, we thank you again for your support in advancing prior authorization reforms in the current legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Hereford'.

James Hereford
President and CEO, Fairview Health Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TOLAR'.

Jakub Tolar, MD, PhD
Dean of the Medical School
Vice President for Clinical Affairs
Distinguished McKnight University Professor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bevan Yueh'.

Bevan Yueh, MD, MPH
CEO, University of Minnesota Physicians

