



March 7th, 2024

Professional Distinction

Personal Dignity

Patient Advocacy

Chair Klein

MN Senate Commerce Finance and Policy
Minnesota State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Klein and Committee Members,

With 22,000 members, the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) is the leading voice for professional nursing in the state of Minnesota. As leaders in labor and health care, we are a voice for frontline hospital nurses around the state who strongly support evidence-based health policy that enables patients to access healthcare. Nurses see the challenges that a lack of health insurance coverage creates and the health disparities it can exacerbate, which is why nurses proudly stand with Dr. Mann in S.F. 3511 to require health plans to cover prenatal, maternity, and postnatal care.

Though Minnesota has lower overall maternal mortality rates than the national average, there are stark disparities in mortality, especially among Black and Indigenous birthing populations. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health reports that babies of parents who do not receive prenatal care are three times more likely to have a low birth weight and five times more likely to die. The World Health Organization reports that the postnatal period is when most maternal deaths occur and the MN Department of Health reports that most pregnancy-associated deaths in Minnesota occur six weeks to one year postpartum. It's time to do better and ensure access to coverage to support this vital care.

Nurses see the results of these policies that restrict access regularly in their own profession. Barriers often result in more serious healthcare issues which burden our already understaffed emergency departments and hospitals. It's important to provide coverage for people of all economic statuses, race, and ethnicity.

Now is the time for Minnesota to remove these barriers to care and ensure that we continue to be a leader in providing equitable healthcare, access, and support for those in need while working to reduce our maternal health disparities. In a state where we are proud of our healthcare system, it is time to ensure that more birthing parents have access to this life saving care. MNA asks that you please support S.F. 3511.

Thank you,

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