



March 18, 2024

Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Via Electronic Delivery

Re: Letter in Support of Senate File 3511

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

Planned Parenthood North Central States (PPNCS) provides a full range of sexual and reproductive health care to Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota at 25 health centers, serving nearly 100,000 patients in the fiscal year 2023. As experts in reproductive health care, Planned Parenthood knows health care access is not the same for everyone. Maternal health disparities need to be addressed so that all people have access to the health care they need, regardless of zip code.

Founded in 1992, the Planned Parenthood Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota Action Fund is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization that advocates for the policy and support needed to make PPNCS's care possible. We work with supporters of all parties to defend and increase access to family planning services, fact based, medically accurate sexuality education, and healthcare access. To that end, we're writing today in support of Senate File 3511 and insurance coverage for prenatal, maternity, and postnatal care.

Minnesota has begun the work of addressing health disparities in sexual and reproductive health care, and we can keep moving forward by requiring health insurance plans to cover prenatal, maternity, and postnatal care. Expenses are a real barrier for patients accessing health care, and they disproportionately impact patients who already face increased barriers to care. Data from the Minnesota Department of Health reports that while Black birthing people (13%) and American Indian birthing people (1.7%) are a small portion of the birthing population, they are disproportionately represented among the pregnancy-associated deaths, making up 26.7% and 12% of the deaths respectively.

All pregnant people deserve access to health care throughout a pregnancy and after. Health disparities are policy choices. Senate File 3511 is a policy solution to make sure that regardless of where people live in Minnesota, their maternal expenses are covered by insurance.

Whether planned or unplanned, pregnancies can come with a lot of unexpected medical and health events. This is what insurance is for – to help Minnesotans manage the expenses associated with medical needs. Every pregnancy is different, and we need to set individuals up with the tools to manage the unexpected health needs that come with pregnancy.

Now is the time to expand access and reduce barriers to health care. Please support Senate File 3511.

Sincerely,

Tim Stanley
Executive Director