



Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

March 6, 2024

Senator John Hoffman, Chair
Senate Human Services Committee
2111 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Seeking support for MARRCH's Policy [SF3984/HF4149](#) and Budget [SF4276/HF4190](#)
Proposals

Dear Chair Hoffman,

We are Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, a dedicated provider of substance use disorder (SUD) services in Minnesota. We offer compassionate, effective treatment to those battling substance use disorders, an issue that continues to devastate communities across our state, particularly in greater Minnesota areas. Our organizational mission is "Harnessing science, love and wisdom of lived experience, we are a force of healing and hope for individuals, families and communities affected by substance use and mental health conditions." Not only do we employ a great number of the State's behavioral health workers, but we are also a CACREP Accredited Graduate school that educates many future LADC's and LPPC's and provide internships for Pre- and Post-Doctorial psychologist. Our investment in the field is significant. We, along with many of the providers in the state are experiencing a workforce shortfall.

The Substance Use Disorder (SUD) field has undergone substantial changes in a relatively short amount of time. Over the past several years, Minnesota has experienced **a net loss of 45 licensed SUD providers** (net loss of 25 in 2022, net loss of 20 in 2023). These losses are having a disproportionate impact in greater Minnesota (in 2022 42% of closures were outside of the 7-county metro area; 41% in 2023). Despite our unwavering commitment, we find ourselves at a critical juncture.

With overdose deaths at an all-time high, we are at a critical breaking point and need **immediate and long-term relief**. These 2024 legislative priorities were identified and developed by more than 240 SUD professionals across the state.

Policy [SF3984/HF4149](#)

Funding [SF4276/HF4190](#)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create hard deadline for paperwork reduction recommendations• Expand alternative paths to licensure• Create a County Affidavit for the Behavioral Health Fund• Align SUD with American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)• Submit an 1115 Waiver for Incarceration by January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Unstrike” SUD and include those services in the 3% increase and automatic inflation adjustment effective 2024• Adopt the SUD rate recommendations for Burnes & Associates• Develop a group peer rate• ASAM certification/Alternative Licensing Inspections• Deduct student loan payments from MN taxes
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The stark reality we face is one where, without immediate and targeted financial support, more providers will be forced to close their doors, thus limiting options for people needing help, and exacerbating an already dire public health crisis.

Investing in SUD services is an investment in the health and well-being of our state. It is a step towards:

- Stabilizing existing services to ensure no further loss of SUD providers.
- Enhancing access to treatment for individuals in both urban and rural areas, particularly in greater Minnesota where the need is most acute.
- Supporting recovery and reducing the broader social and economic impacts of substance use disorders on our communities.

The challenges we face are significant, but not insurmountable. With your support, we can ensure that individuals battling substance use disorders receive the care and support they need to rebuild their lives. We urge you to prioritize this funding increase, to stand with us in our mission, and to help stem the tide of this crisis that is ravaging our state.

We would gladly meet to discuss this request further. Any questions regarding MARRCH can be sent to Brian Zirbes at executivedirector@marrch.org. Thank you for considering our plea and for your ongoing commitment to the health and well-being of all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Cecelia Jayme
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