

April 5, 2024

To Chair Hoffman and Committee Members:

**Southwest West Central Education Service Cooperative's The READY Clinic would like to express our strong support for SF 5264.**

The READY Clinic is a small provider of Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI) services serving an 18 county region in southwestern Minnesota. Our EIDBI clinics are located in the rural communities of Montevideo, Cosmos, Pipestone and Marshall, providing both diagnostic evaluations and intensive treatment services for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related conditions.

Since beginning operations in 2019, The READY Clinic has faced significant barriers to providing EIDBI services in these rural communities. We like many of the rural EIDBI providers are in need of immediate emergency relief to sustain clinical operations and continue to serve families in our region.

These challenges include:

- A year-over-year increase in the demand for services for children seeking medically-necessary services. Our waitlist time for diagnostic evaluations is currently over 200 days and many families wait for over a year for in-clinic EIDBI services.
- Significant expenditures to recruit and retain qualified staff to deliver services in the small communities we serve, areas that already experience a shortage of direct support and health care providers.
- While reimbursement rates for services have improved in 2024, the current rates still create monthly shortfalls for organizations like ours. The margin for each billable service does not allow us to cover our operating expenses, recruit and retain staff, and ultimately, grow our services to serve more families.

As you can see in the attached maps, even though nearly every county in Minnesota has families seeking EIDBI services, there are a limited number of EIDBI service providers who can overcome these barriers in Greater Minnesota. Without an immediate emergency relief grant, many of these providers are likely to close in the next 12-24 months, under the weight of consecutive years of financial loss.

We are aware and grateful for recent legislative efforts and work to establish rate changes that meet the needs of all EIDBI providers statewide. We are currently asking for this immediate emergency grant program to bridge the gap so service providers like ours remain open in the meantime.

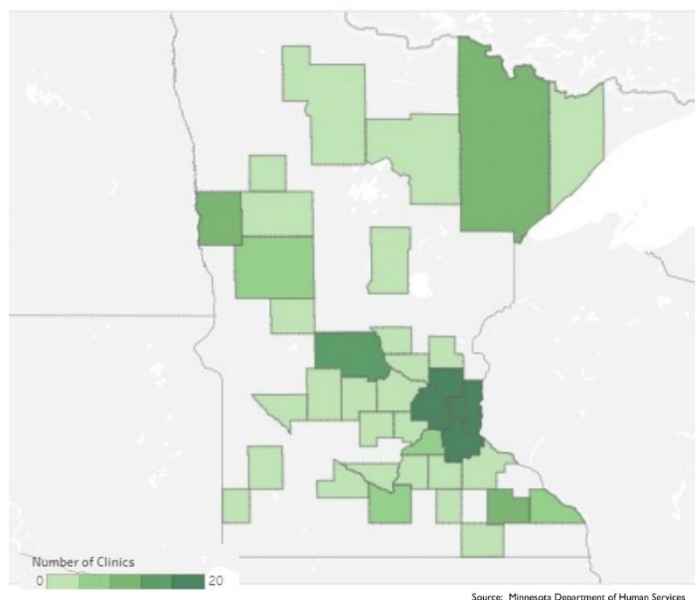
We strongly believe that where you live in Minnesota should not determine your access to high-quality, life changing EIDBI services.

Thank you for your work in this committee to ensure that EIDBI families can live in their community with access to the services they need.

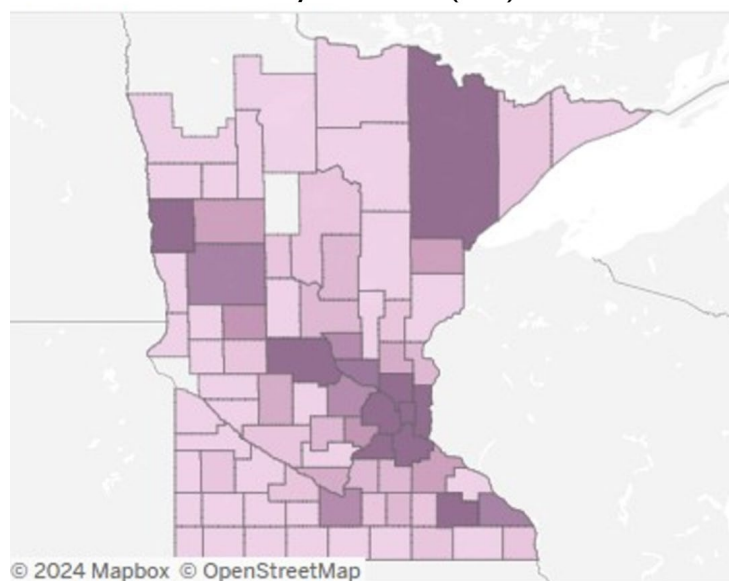
Sincerely,

Amber Bruns  
Clinical Director of Behavioral Health Services  
The READY Clinic

**Number of EIDBI Providers in Minnesota (2023)**



**Number of Distinct Recipients with at least One EIDBI Claim by County of Residence (2023)**



Source: Minnesota Department of Human Services