



April 16th, 2024

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

Dear Chair Hoffman:

Thank you for assembling a Human Services Omnibus Bill that addresses many key needs for people across Minnesota. It is never an easy task to choose what to include and what not to include in an issue area requiring many important investments. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation for including funding for the Bridging Benefits program at the Department of Human Services. This is a vital program that helps connect people at high risk for recidivism with the services and supports that help prevent a re-offense.

One proposal missing from the Senate Human Services Omnibus bill is the proposal regarding the 1115 Reentry Medicaid Waiver. This proposal is a transformational investment that will reduce overdose deaths and recidivism and will result in healthier and safer communities across Minnesota. It is also a key pillar in the Walz Flanagan strategy to reduce the number of overdose deaths across Minnesota.

One in five fatal overdoses since 2015 occurred with an individual who experienced incarceration within the past year. The Department of Corrections is one of the largest, if not the largest provider of SUD treatment in Minnesota with about 85% of persons incarcerated experiencing a substance use disorder. A study from MMB showed that less than half of all jails provided access to medicines for opioid use disorder. We also know that those who are engaged in treatment and recovery are less likely to reoffend.

The proposal provides MA coverage for a set of services up to 90 days prerelease, including access to medicines for opioid use disorder and care coordination, for individuals leaving carceral settings, giving that individual a strong foundation to transition into a healthy recovery ecosystem. Providing quality, consistent care that is continuous from incarceration through re-entry will pay dividends in improving the lives of Minnesotans and their communities.

This proposal is also a cost-effective way to draw down significant federal dollars to pay for and improve not only the services that incarcerated Minnesotans receive, but also increase and improve the capacity for jails and prisons to provide these critical services. Many of the capacity

building and administrative dollars in this proposal come with a 90/10 federal match, making this a powerful lever to improve the infrastructure of Minnesota's carceral institutions.

Currently 16 states have already submitted reentry demonstration requests; California, Washington, and Montana have already been approved.

We look forward to future discussions around the 1115 Reentry Waiver proposal as we head to conference committee and are at your disposal to address any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Drucker
Assistant Commissioner Minnesota Management and Budget
Director of the Office of Addiction and Recovery