



February 17, 2025

Dear Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), representing more than 10,000 physicians and physicians-in-training across the state, I am writing in support of Senate File 971. Medical decisions that are made based on trying to do what is best for the patient, and within the standard of care, should not be subject to criminal action. This legislation is essential to ensure that our healthcare providers can focus on delivering care to those in need without the overhanging concern of potential criminal liability.

In the face of providing medical care that at times can be in an emergency setting, health care professionals often find themselves making rapid decisions under immense pressure. These decisions can mean the difference between life and death. Fear of criminal charges should not hinder their ability to act swiftly, decisively, and in line with their training and medical standards of care.

Physicians are well-versed in their oath to prioritize patient care, respect patient autonomy, and maintain ethical standards of care. I know the same can be said for all our nurses, physician assistants, and other healthcare providers across the state. Physicians who practice outside of the standard of care are still subject to civil action and oversight by the medical licensing board. We should not add the risk of criminal penalty as well.

Senate File 971 will provide protection to health care providers that they will not be subject to criminal prosecution for unintentional mistakes. I urge you to support Senate File 971.

Sincerely,

Edwin Bogonko, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association