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501-c-3 Nonprofit

A Circle of Courage Agency ®

RE: SF 1402 MA RATES & SF 0928 SCHOOL LINKED MENTAL HEALTH

Hello,

We are asking the Health and Human Services committee to please endorse these proposals. We have been serving youth with high-risk Mental Health problems for decades throughout the State of Minnesota, in nearly 40 *rural* counties, with 200+ counselors. We serve over 3,000 high risk youth and their families each year.

As our director, I am saying this very sincerely and *truthfully*, without these supports I/we will need to cut our workforce, and thereby literally, hundreds of children will no longer receive services in their schools and homes (yes, we work in the homes of families as well with MA assistance:).

When it comes to MA rates I believe it is essential for decision makers to know that we have not received an increase in MA rates for Mental Health services since 2007—18 years. Some may quibble with that by saying some covered services have increased, and yet, we have seen some covered services that have changed negatively. Our CFO reports that clearly, overall, our rates *have not* increased for 18 years. Every time I get asked about this lack of funding increases people ask me: “well how have you been able to survive then?” I tell them it is only because of the supportive grants we have received that we have been able to keep our doors open. So without SF 0928 funding (and most of the other grants we have relied upon are ‘evaporating’)—our organization will have real, serious, losses of staff; and hundreds of high-risk children will not receive Mental Health services.

Please—we truly, truly need the support of these bills to keep our doors open and help the children in our State. Thank You!

~Sincerely~

George Dubie

CEO of Greater Minnesota Family Services (Willmar, MN headquarters)