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Lighthouse Child & Family Services Inc.
150 10th St. NW Suite 2
Milaca MN 56353

RE: Medicaid Rates SF 1402

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the 45 staff of Lighthouse Child & Family Services Inc. (LCFS) located in Milaca MN to **support SF 1402 Medical assistance rate adjustments establishment for physician and professional services**. This bill is important to our work in the field of mental health. LCFS employs 46 staff who provide an array of mental health services to families across the 10 rural counties we serve in MN.

Specifically, the sunsetting of the 2007 CTSS rates has left us struggling to provide essential support and benefits to our staff, along with opportunities for annual equitable cost of living increases. However, Bill SF 1402 will ensure that behavioral health services will receive an annual increase based on the MEI. This annual increase will allow LCFS to carry those dollars forward to the people directly providing this essential work. Your support of SF 1402 will allow for more equitable staff wages which have direct impacts on successful recruitment, retention and support of staff in these underserved rural areas.

Please support SF 1402, as it will not only strengthen our current services but also enable us to expand our offerings by hiring additional staff and providing more support to families in need within our communities.

Thank you for your service to our communities and thank you for taking action to keep Minnesota's children and families strong.

Sincerely,

Julie Hanenburg

Julie Hanenburg MSW, LICSW
Founder – Executive Director
Lighthouse Child & Family Services, Inc.