



Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Health and Human Services Committee
February 26, 2025

Chair Wiklund and Health and Human Services Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW-MN), the MN Society for Clinical Social Work and other members of the MN Coalition of Licensed Social Workers, we are writing in support of several being heard in the Health and Human Services omnibus bill on February 26, 2025.

NASW-MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state and the Coalition includes the MN Association of Black Social Workers, the MN Hmong Social Workers' Coalition, the MN Nursing Home Social Workers Association, the MN School Social Workers Association, and the MN Society for Clinical Social Work. Collectively we represent over 3,000 social workers.

SF 1402

There is currently a significant gap between the cost of delivering services and Medical Assistance reimbursement rates. Addressing this gap will improve access to services, increase capacity in mental health settings, and reduce staffing shortages.

SF 1402 sets all RBRVS rates to at least equal to 100% Medicare and raises children's community-based mental health services (HCPCS) immediately. It will phase in other needed rate increases over the next two years. These are services that are often already being provided but without proper reimbursement rates, it is difficult for providers to maintain these essential mental health services to their communities.

Social work is based on a mission to enhance the well-being of humans. We advocate for our clients, and want to ensure that social workers and other professionals are supported in their work.

SF 1561

Boarding children in need of mental health services in inappropriate settings deprives them of appropriate care, exacerbates their conditions, and increases their risk of long-term trauma and criminal justice system involvement.

Addressing children's mental health needs early and helping families access necessary services prevents crises that lead to criminal justice involvement or hospitalization, ensures appropriate care, reduces trauma, keeps families intact, and promotes the long-term well-being of the child and family.

SF 928

Social workers join the Mental Health Legislative Network (MHLN) in supporting this proposal to improve access to children's mental health services.

Among other changes, SF 928 allows school-linked behavioral health grants to support parents to access mental health care if needed to meet the treatment needs of the student. Social workers understand the importance of working not just with the person in front of them, but drawing in the perspectives and connections with others in their family systems. This is particularly important for children.

SF 477 & SF 8

We are supportive of both of these bills.

Allowing medical assistance coverage of psychiatric collaborative care model proposed in SF 8, and adjusting timelines and providing clarifying language on client care in SF 477 is important to our work. Addressing these issues reduces barriers in the workforce, allowing better access and higher service to people seeking mental health treatment.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Coalition of Licensed Social Workers Representatives,

Karen Goodenough, PhD, LGSW, National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter

Renita Wilson, MSW, LICSW, MN Association of Black Social Workers

Kao Nou Moua, PhD, MSW, LGSW, MN Hmong Social Workers' Coalition,

Joanna Genovese-Cairns, MSW, LISW, MN Nursing Home Social Workers Association

Julie Campanelli, LICSW, Ed.S, MN School Social Workers Association

James Stoltz, LICSW, LADC, MN Society for Clinical Social Work

Jenny Arneson, MSW, LGSW, Legislative Consultant