



February 24, 2025

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2107
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund,

I am writing in support of S.F. 1402, your legislation which would increase payment rates for mental health services provided to Medical Assistance patients.

PrairieCare is Minnesota's largest provider of intensive mental health services for children and adolescents. We provide care to patients from all 87 counties through care led by our board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrists and advanced practice clinicians – one of the largest psychiatric medical groups in the region. We have served over 100,000 children, adolescents, adults and families at our eight locations in the Twin Cities, Rochester and Mankato since opening our first out-patient clinic in 2005. Our affiliated charitable non-profit, the PrairieCare Fund, has provided over \$1.6 million in grants to 103 schools and nonprofits since 2016 to help educate students, teachers, staff and parents about maintaining mental health and ways to overcome challenges.

Thousands of our patients are enrolled in Medical Assistance. During the pandemic we saw a dramatic increase in patients enrolled in MA due to the severe challenges their households faced with lost income, food and housing insecurity, lack of internet and remote learning resources and the disproportionate death rate among low-income households.

Minnesota's MA payment rates are the lowest in the Midwest and do not cover the cost of care. The ongoing influx of MA enrolled patients seeking mental health care has put great financial stress on our ability to maintain services to those in need. As a result of stagnant reimbursements, our growth has been stifled, innovation hindered, and our outpatient capacity has decreased.

We need the payment increases for mental health providers contained in S.F. 1402. Individuals and families across Minnesota will continue to need mental health services and your bill will help assure they will be able to get the care they need when they need it.

Thank you for your efforts on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Todd Archbold
Chief Executive Officer