



Volunteers of America of Minnesota
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Behavioral and Mental Health Program

February 25, 2025

RE: Support for SF 1402 – Medical Assistance Rate Adjustments for Physician and Professional Services

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

On behalf of Volunteers of America of Minnesota, I am writing to express our strong support for SF 1402, which seeks to establish critical Medical Assistance rate adjustments for physician and professional services. As a nonprofit provider of mental health services, we work with nearly 800 young people each year in outpatient clinics, school-based programs, community and home settings, and residential treatment. The need for accessible, high-quality mental health care has never been greater, yet current reimbursement rates make it increasingly difficult to sustain these essential services.

The youth we serve come to us with significant mental health challenges, often exacerbated by trauma, housing instability, and systemic barriers to care. Whether a young person receives therapy in a school setting, at home, or in a residential treatment facility, our ability to provide timely and comprehensive services depends on a stable and adequately compensated workforce. Unfortunately, stagnant Medical Assistance reimbursement rates have created persistent financial strain, making it difficult to recruit and retain highly skilled mental health professionals.

SF 1402 takes a vital step toward addressing this challenge by adjusting rates to reflect the true cost of delivering care. Increased reimbursement will help ensure that organizations like ours can continue providing life-changing mental health services to youth who might otherwise go without care. Investments in these services not only improve individual outcomes but also strengthen families and communities by reducing crisis interventions, emergency room visits, and long-term system involvement.

We urge you to support SF 1402 and prioritize sustainable funding for mental health services across Minnesota. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to improving access to care for our most vulnerable residents. We welcome the opportunity to share further insights from our experience and stand ready to support this effort in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Manworren".

Julie Manworren, President & CEO
Volunteers of America of Minnesota