

February 25, 2025

Women's Foundation of Minnesota Supports SF 8/HF 958

Minnesota Senate Health and Human Services committee members,

As the President and CEO of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota, I am writing to express our support for SF 8, a bill that would provide medical assistance coverage of the psychiatric collaborative care model.

For over 40 years, the Women's Foundation has invested more than \$45 million in organizations across the state, and advanced policies to create a state where women, girls, and their families can thrive.

Our research with the Center on Women, Gender, & Public Policy at the Humphrey School presents startling statistics that reveal a mental health crisis for women and girls, across age groups, in Minnesota. In July of 2023, 27 percent of Minnesotan women reported symptoms of an anxiety or depressive disorder. Alarming, 60 percent of ninth-grade girls have seriously considered attempting suicide while two-thirds of college women in our state have reported a mental health diagnosis in their lives and 18 percent of women 65 and older have reported depressive symptoms.

The uninsured, underinsured, rural areas and communities of color are more likely to face barriers to receiving care. The collaborative care model would bring these mental health care services into the primary care setting and fully include their primary care physician in care plans. Studies have found that this model can reduce stigma and overall cost of care and lead to faster diagnosis and subsequent treatment of mental health conditions.

As defined by the World Health Organization, health is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity but must also be inclusive of complete physical, mental and social well-being. We appreciate the work of Senator Boldon and the co-authors of SF 8 for bringing this bill forward and for their continued work to create and pursue policies that will make Minnesota safer for women and girls. We urge you to support SF 8 to advance a truly healthy Minnesota.



Gloria Perez
President & CEO