

CHANGE INC.

February 25, 2025

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

We are writing to you today in support of both the Medicaid Rates (SF 1402) and School-linked Funding, NEMT improvements & aftercare support (SF 0928) proposals.

Change Inc. provides mental health care to children, youth, and young adults in the Metro. Our School-Based Mental Health program addresses mental and emotional barriers to school success and serves over 700 kids annually. Throughout the past 15 years, our mental health and support services have expanded to include mentoring, case management, care coordination, and out-patient therapy.

Current Medicaid mental health rates are low and out-of-date and greatly impacting on our ability to provide greatly needed services— including delays in accessing care, shrinkage of key services, and the inability to staff critical care. We can clearly see how this is generating systemic crisis – within and outside of the mental health system – for children and families. The urgently needed solution to this crisis is to fix the rates.

School linked mental health services remove the barriers families experience to accessing critical supports for their children so that they find success in school and life. It is well-understood that our children are not okay given all the societal stressors impacting families and communities. Their health and wellness are key to the future vitality of our neighborhoods, cities and state.

We are asking you to make sure that fixing the Medicaid mental health rates and school-linked funding, NEMT improvements & aftercare support will be the highest priorities for the 2025 session.

Sincerely,



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INSTITUTE

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