



February 24, 2025

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Minnesota State Senate
95 University Ave W
Saint Paul, MN 55155

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

On behalf of St. David's Center for Child & Family Development, I write in strong support of the following critical bills that address urgent mental health challenges affecting Minnesota's children and families. Based on the care we provide over 6,500 children and families around the greater Twin Cities metro, these bills are especially relevant to the cost-effective, early-intervention services St. David's Center provides:

- SF 1402: Medicaid Rates
- SF 0928: School-linked funding, NEMT improvements & aftercare support

As a leading provider of developmental therapies and mental health treatment and support, St. David's Center witnesses firsthand the profound impact that gaps in services and funding have on children and families in Minnesota. These essential bills represent significant steps toward strengthening the state's mental health system and ensuring that families receive the timely and appropriate care they deserve, and that will ensure the wellbeing of our communities.

SF 1402: Medicaid Rates

Low reimbursement rates have long hindered access to quality mental health care for children and families. Increased Medicaid rates will ensure that providers can sustain high-quality services and retain a skilled workforce to meet the growing mental health needs of our community.

SF 0928: School-linked funding, NEMT improvements & aftercare support

As we see every day in our 30 partner sites and at our three locations, school-linked mental health services and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) improvements are essential to reduce barriers for vulnerable families and ensure all Minnesota's children can access the care they need to thrive.

We urge your support of this legislation to enhance mental health care accessibility, improve service delivery, and better support the health, educational achievement, and lifelong success of Minnesota's children and families. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to addressing these pressing issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Sjoridal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Julie" and last name "Sjoridal" clearly visible.

Julie Sjoridal
Chief Executive Officer
St. David's Center for Child & Family Development