

Minnesota Senate
Health and Human Services Committee
Chair Sen. Wiklund
March 12, 2025

Re: SF 0856 Establishing Office of Inspector General

Good afternoon, Madam Chair, and members. My name is Idil Abdull, I am a Somali Autism Mom and trying to retire advocate.

I am cautiously optimistic about this bill but have concerns and reservations. As we all know and please let's not pretend – Minnesota has some of the worst racial gaps between whites, blacks, and brown people from health to education to you name it.

I know often legislators react to news stories rather than be proactive and lately there have been lots of stories about fraud waste and abuse in autism services. If you read most of these news articles, you will see information that is impossible coming from anonymous people that we cannot verify.

For example, autism therapy agencies hire 19-year-olds. And? That is who does the therapy for black/brown/white agencies but somehow when it is a Somali agency, it is bad. When my son was getting autism therapy from white autism centers, his direct therapists were 19-year-olds. A 40-year-old cannot run after a 4- or 5-year-old for hours, they will have a heart attack. Additionally, the news articles told us – there were children as young as two. That is a good thing. The goal is early intervention not late intervention. They told us there were children who did not have autism. And? The EIDBI statute **256B.0949** states that a licensed mental professional can do a comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation to see if the child has any delays stated in DSM-5 which would qualify him/her for EIDBI services. The goal here was to not have children wait for a formal autism diagnosis for years and years which defeats the idea of early intervention.

My worry is as you can see – our community and others will suffer by some anonymous person who can lie and give false information and damage people who are doing good work. How will this new agency ensure fairness prevails and discrimination fails? Please consider our concerns and come up with policies that protect children with autism and all vulnerable people in Minnesota while making sure more disparity is not created.

Finally, if the state of Minnesota legislators care about waste, fraud, and abuse, why do you ignore the fact that Managed organizations take hundreds of millions of dollars every year from Medicaid via the department of human services without any tangible audit including following the federal single audit act. MCOs get Medicaid funds in advance for services

they did not provide and may never provide. Why isn't that fraud, waste, and abuse? And why does that not bother you all?

As always, thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Idil Abdull