



Minnesota Hospital Association

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Submitted Electronically

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

We are writing to you today on behalf of the Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) regarding multiple provisions in SF 2669 (Wiklund), the Governor's Health and Human Services budget bill proposal.

Concerns with Significant Licensing Fee Increases in Article 1. MHA is continuing to assess the potential financial impacts of the numerous significant licensing fee increases on hospitals proposed throughout Article 1 of SF 2669. Given the breadth of the fee increases proposed, MHA estimates that some hospitals could have net licensing fees increase by tens of thousands of dollars depending on the types of services they offer and the specialized equipment that they subsequently use. MHA understands that fees are necessary to support regulatory oversight and patient safety, however the apparent blanket fee increases in Article 1 may need adjustment to better align with actual costs to the Department. MHA will provide further comments if needed.

Additionally, MHA also continues to assess the potential impacts of Article 1, Sections 38-44 which establishes new governance, including fees, and rulemaking for X-ray service provider practices including service technicians, vendors, qualified medical physicists, qualified experts, and physicist assistants. Similarly, MHA will provide further comments if needed.

Support for Extension of Medical Assistance (MA) Audio-only Telehealth. MHA strongly supports the temporary extension of MA coverage of audio-only telehealth in Article 2, Section 4. MA coverage for audio-only telehealth services has been invaluable in expanding access to critical health care services and helping mitigate provider workforce shortages across Minnesota.

The telehealth study released by the MDH in September 2024 outlines how audio-only telehealth is an important tool to increase availability of equitable care to patients with behavioral health and chronic care conditions and individuals with limited broadband access. MHA encourages the legislature to support the Governor's proposal to preserve patient access to telehealth services in all geographic areas of the state by extending coverage of MA audio-only telehealth services.

Thank you for the consideration of our comments, we look forward to working with this Committee as the health and human services budget takes full shape. Sincerely,

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