



March 28, 2025

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2107
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for regional continuum of care for serving youth (SF 2349)

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Olmsted County, I write to respectfully urge your support for [SF 2349](#). Thank you for hearing the bill and for the opportunity to comment.

The provisions in SF 2349 were developed in partnership by seven counties (mostly in the metro area but also including Olmsted County) who have been working collaboratively to address the need for improvements in how counties serve youth with complex mental health and behavioral needs. The result will be a regional continuum of care for serving youth no matter how they enter county systems, using a whole-person, cross-system approach.

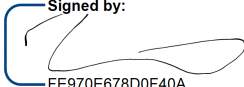
As recommended by the Working Group on Youth Interventions, establishing a regional approach will help address the overlapping of juvenile justice and human services systems to provide placement and treatment options across the continuum. The regional framework will also help counties leverage individual and collective assets and resources, identify gaps, and develop solutions.

To implement the regional framework, the participating counties have identified legislative changes which will have an immediate and positive impact on the continuum of care. These include:

- Forming a legislative task force to revise and update Minnesota Administrative Rules Chapter [2960](#)
- Addressing placement options for youth
- Removing a moratorium on new beds for foster care homes
- Beginning to implement the rate study recommendations for non-residential youth programming

Thank you for your consideration of SF 2349 and for your support of a regional continuum of care to better serve youth in our communities.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

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3/28/2025 | 3:58 PM CDT

Mark Thein, Chair
Olmsted County Board of Commissioners