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

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we have come together as the Healthcare Workforce Support Coalition to identify new policy opportunities that help address Minnesota's healthcare and social services industry workforce challenges. Our membership is comprised of a broad representation of healthcare providers, such as hospitals, dental providers and ambulatory surgical centers. Together, we are committed to identifying solutions that will support our workforce and serve our patients.

The Minnesota 2023 Job Vacancy Survey, prepared by the Department of Employment and Economic Development, identified *Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations* and *Healthcare Support Occupations* as the professional categories with the third and fourth (respectively) highest number of job vacancies. The two categories noted more than 26,000 vacancies in healthcare-related careers. Determining solutions is an ongoing process, and we, as a coalition, continue to challenge ourselves to identify more traditional policy opportunities, like streamlined licensure pathways and loan forgiveness, and creative alternatives, like exposure to healthcare learning opportunities at earlier ages, to address these outstanding job vacancies.

The primary themes and goals outlined by our coalition are three-fold:

- Ensure safety in our healthcare settings for staff and patients.
- Make it easier and more appealing to work in healthcare in Minnesota.
- Retain, reskill and upskill existing healthcare workers in Minnesota.

We encourage you to consider proposals that seek to achieve the above-mentioned goals and are happy to discuss the impact of such proposals.

Thank you for supporting those who dedicate their careers to providing quality care for Minnesota's patients. We hope you'll join us in identifying and securing solutions that help increase the number of Minnesotans entering the healthcare workforce and supporting growth throughout their careers.

Please support SF 831.