



April 7, 2025

Re: AMC Supports SF 3149 - County-Administered Rural Medical Assistance (CARMA)

Dear Chair Wiklund and Senate Health & Human Services Committee Members:

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) enthusiastically supports the County-Administered Rural Medical Assistance (CARMA) program establishment in SF3149 (Hoffman, Utke, Mann, Abeler, Kupec). This important rural health care innovation is the result of historic collaboration over the last two years among counties and the Department of Human Services (DHS), and AMC has been an active participant in helping develop the CARMA program.

CARMA builds on the 45-year success story of County-Based Purchasing plans (§256B.692) across Greater Minnesota and is an important opportunity to “do better together” among counties, DHS, and rural care providers in delivering public health care programs to people in need. It leverages what counties do best, representing a bipartisan, innovative solution that can serve as a rural health model to the nation.

Last year, the Legislature passed bipartisan legislation directing counties and DHS to work together to bring forward CARMA to be ratified this session. We have worked together diligently and are proud to bring forward this proposal. CARMA is an advancement of the county-based approach to delivering public programs, and a distinct, county owned and administered alternative to the Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP). It features greater integration of health care, public health, and social services to address Health Related Social Needs (HRSN), accounts for the smaller number of Medical Assistance enrollees and providers in rural counties, streamlines systems to better serve enrollees, and promotes greater accountability for outcomes.

AMC thanks you for your leadership and dedication to strengthening rural health care. We appreciate your consideration of this important proposal and appreciate your continued support of county-based solutions as we strive to “do better together.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JR".

Julie Ring, Executive Director
Association of Minnesota Counties