



1753 Cottonwood Circle • Saint Cloud, MN 56303 • www.machp.org

April 8, 2025

TO: Senate Health and Human Services Committee

RE: County-Administered Rural Medical Assistance (CARMA) SF 3149

Dear Chair Wiklund, and Committee Members:

The Minnesota Association of County Health Plans (MACHP) is an alliance of County-Based Purchasing Plans serving more than 80,000 members enrolled in Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) each month across 32 counties. **CBP plans, and the 32 counties that own and operate them, strongly support SF 3149 CARMA** as an important advancement of this unique rural health model that has successfully served public program enrollees for 45 years.

The CARMA model was first proposed in 2022 by mediators in that year's disputed state public programs procurement. After years of disagreements with DHS over county authority in procurements under current CBP law, **mediators felt it was time for counties and DHS to build something better together**. The first CARMA Work Group met early in 2023, and has engaged in nearly monthly Steering Committee meetings, with dozens of technical sub-group meetings, ever since. Last year, the legislature directed DHS, AMC and the CBP plans to bring forward this CARMA model legislation in 2025. We thank Sen. Hoffman and Sen. Utke for carrying this important legislation.

CARMA represents a distinct, county owned and administered alternative to the Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP) in rural counties. It moves from a convoluted PMAP procurement process to direct multi-year contracting, allowing stability and time for real results. Rural counties can choose either CARMA or traditional PMAP. CARMA has a unique focus on integration of care with county social services, public health and other county programs and services, particularly in the area of Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN).

CARMA represents **historic collaboration among counties and DHS** in advancing county-based care and solutions. We appreciate your careful consideration and **encourage your support of SF 3149**.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Gottwalt

Executive Director
952-923-5265 | steve@machp.org

Cc: MACHP Board of Directors
Association of MN Counties