



April 8, 2025

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
2107 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Dental Association (MDA), thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for the Senate Health and Human Services Omnibus - SF2669. The MDA appreciates the inclusion of several provisions within the bill, as described below, but strongly encourages the committee to not increase the provider tax.

Support - Single Dental Administrator Two Year Delay (Article 7, Section 2)

The MDA supports the concept of a single administrator for MHCP dental services to improve transparency and reduce administrative burdens. A 2022 DHS report highlighted the very real challenges dentists face when participating in MHCP, including low reimbursement rates, inconsistent care coordination, and varying administrative processes across fee-for-service, managed care, and county-based purchasing models. Our members experience these barriers every day, and a single administrator has the potential to streamline and improve the system.

However, key details—particularly around reimbursement—still need to be resolved to ensure a smooth and successful transition. Our shared goal is to build a system that works better for both providers and patients. For that reason, the MDA supports a delay to allow time to work through these issues thoughtfully. We also support the removal of the statutory language tying single administrator reimbursement to fee-for-service rates, as outlined in Article 7, Section 2.

Support - Treat Yourself First Campaign (Article 26, Section 3)

The MDA supports the appropriation for the Treat Yourself First Campaign. A 2021 survey by the American Dental Association revealed that the percentage of dentists diagnosed with anxiety **tripled** compared to 2003. Many reported feeling less in control of their work environment, experiencing heightened stress, and scoring high on a depression scale. Burnout and stress-related conditions are increasingly affecting dental professionals.

Dentists often work in small or solo practices with limited access to peer support and mental health resources. The profession's physical demands—long hours in static positions, precision-driven work, and the emotional toll of treating anxious patients—exacerbate stress and fatigue. Without proper mental health support, these challenges can lead to burnout, early retirement, reduced patient access to care, and diminished quality of service. Mentally and physically healthy dentists can provide compassionate, high-quality care for their patients.



Oppose - Minnesota Care Provider Tax Increase (Article 6 – Section 22)

The MDA was surprised to see a proposed increase to the provider tax—from 1.8% to 2%—included in the health and human services omnibus bill. This significant change was not discussed in committee this session, and moving forward without meaningful stakeholder engagement is both unexpected and concerning.

Minnesota's public health care programs like MHCP are critical and must be adequately funded. However, increasing the provider tax shifts the responsibility of funding these programs onto the very people delivering care—many of whom are small business owners already navigating rising costs for supplies, staffing, and overhead. Dentists are committed to serving their communities, but added financial strain risks limiting access, especially in rural and underserved areas. We urge lawmakers to remove this provision and engage providers in a broader conversation about sustainable funding solutions.

Should you have any questions on the above-mentioned items, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Murphy".

Dan Murphy, MPP
Director of Government Affairs
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About the Minnesota Dental Association

The Minnesota Dental Association is the voice of dentistry in Minnesota, representing practicing dentists. It is committed to the highest standards of oral health and access to care for all Minnesotans. Learn more at: www.mndental.org.