

April 8, 2025



Chair Melissa Wicklund  
Minnesota Senate  
Health and Human Services Committee

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Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members:

I am writing today to express my support and gratitude for your proposal to the omnibus bill that includes critically needed resources and support for children's mental health and wellbeing.

My name is Julie Sjordal and I am the CEO of St. David's Developmental and Therapeutic Services. St. David's is a Twin Cities based nonprofit organization with a sixty-four-year history of providing a range of development services for children and families, including mental health.

We offer a continuum of interventions from diagnostic assessments to clinic and school-based outpatient services to intensive day treatment. We offer services that can prevent children from being hospitalized and/or we are where they go after hospitalization as they work through the circumstances that caused them to go into crisis. These are children who have experienced more trauma and struggle in their young lives than many of us will face in a lifetime – at a time when their brains are literally forming. Our goal is to offer healing and corrective experiences in a transformational time of their lives, preventing terrible long-term outcomes.

We are doing this work while seeing the crisis level rise in need, both increase in numbers and acuity. All providers across our state have waitlists for services. There are over 2000 children on St. David's waitlist alone.

The investments you are proposing for the omnibus bill will provide the funding and structure necessary to keep life changing mental health services in place for children in Minnesota. I want to thank you for supporting the following:

- Medicaid Outpatient Rate Increases (implementing the DHS rate study), *and* an MCO assessment that leverages the required federal funding to make this investment
- Boarding decompression funding through a pilot with the Mental Health Collaboration Fund
- Kinship Licensing and Support language
- School-Linked Mental Health funding
- CMH-TCM fix to bill ages 18-21 under the definition of child (per Medicaid)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Sjordal".

Julie Sjordal  
Chief Executive Officer