

Minnesota Senate
Human Services Committee
Co-Chairs: Sen Hoffman and Sen Rasmusson
1.29.25

Re: State Medicaid Agency's proposal for EIDBI

Co-Chairs and members, I am hoping this can get into the committee's record and I am allowed to testify. My name is Idil Abdull; I am a Somali Autism Mom & trying to retire advocate.

I want to start by telling you this committee has been painful to follow and send comments. There are no directions or guidance on when public testimony is allowed or not. The agenda and the people who are invited have been secret at least for the one last week.

Please know that this is a public committee discussing public policy and it must be fair and open to the public – full stop.

Now, let me give you my comments regarding a day too late and a dollar too short licensure EIDBI proposal by DHS:

1. I and other Somali autism parents went to DHS almost 10 years ago and reported child abuse and maltreatment. There was a therapist who worked at Minnesota Autism Center in the Woodbury location who stated she witnessed child abuse and cruel treatments. She also said MAC knew and hid the abuse from the families. There was also another abuse in MAC location in Mankato that DHS did nothing. Is DHS also going to license CTSS agencies who provide autism therapy since many autism centers function under that?

https://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/local_news/minnesota-autism-center-supervisor-faces-criminal-charge/article_b815e5ae-ea03-11e5-91b8-13bfe6779a2c.html

2. DHS told the therapist report to the county who said call the police who did nothing because MAC management denied it all.
3. There was a Somali autism mom whose child was hit and did report again to DHS, the police, and the county. Guess what happened – nada and nothing.
4. I cannot help but think DHS now mentioning maltreatment in a Somali owned autism therapy agency is nothing short of racism and unfair overreach. If DHS cared about children with autism, they would have done something about it when many autism families reported abuse, but the difference was those agencies were owned

by white Americans, not Somali Americans. Think about that and tell me it is not differential treatment.

5. I hope the two Somali senators in this committee stay vigilant and take anything DHS says with a grain of salt. They have been unfair and biased at best towards our community. The same with the media who refused to report any wrongdoing by any white autism therapy agencies but when a Somali sneezes the wrong way, they are all over it like white on rice.
6. DHS states there are thousands of children with autism being served by current EIDBI providers. That is good news. Those are children who did not get services before EIDBI and will hopefully depend less on the system.
7. DHS fails to tell us the race/ethnicity of the children being served and the current EIDBI providers, why?
8. DHS fails to mention autism is 1 in 16 in Somali children born in Minnesota who are four years old. You know what these children are – as American as apple pie. Why is DHS and the legislators pretending to be blind about it? If these kids do not get early intervention, they will depend on the system which will be 1000% more expensive than getting services through EIDBI.
9. DHS mentions following the BACB board, why? There are other better qualified behavior analysis boards such as Qualified Applied Behavior Analysis (QABA) which is a national and internationally recognized board that focuses on autism unlike the BACB.
10. If the case load of the qualified supervising professional and/or the behavior analyst is limited to twelve children or so, and EIDBI is serving thousands, wouldn't that mean kids will not get services, at most there are only three hundred or so behavior analysts in Minnesota. DHS cannot limit access for children.
11. DHS mentions things they can fix now such as having a business phone line, email that is privacy compliant, and safe place to do therapy. Instead of complaining about miniscule items they have the power to do, they should give each new and/or current EIDBI agency a checklist to follow. DHS needs to do training for new and current EIDBI providers in-person, not a drive through webinar where they silence people. They preach person-centered but fail to follow it.
12. DHS needs to provide stricter oversight to ensure the children are learning, the family understands their rights and responsibilities and progress is tangible. They can do this now and do not need a license; they are simply an agency of minimum effort and only takes up issues if God forbid is in the news.

Sincerely, Idil Abdull – Somali Autism Mom