



# Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota

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*Cansayapi Otunwe*

March 18, 2025

Senator John Hoffman  
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee  
95 University Avenue W.  
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2111  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: [S.F. 1953 relating to eligibility for adult mental health targeted case management]

Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota, a sovereign and federally recognized Indian tribe ("Community"), writes to support Senate File 1953, as amended. This bill includes a revision to Minnesota Statutes, section 246.462, subdivision 20 for broadening the definition of mental illness to include "complex posttraumatic stress disorder" (C-PTSD) as someone who has posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms that significantly interfere with daily functioning related to intergenerational trauma, racial trauma, or unresolved historical grief. It also includes a revision that accommodates continued case management or community support services for adults so they can maintain their recovery.

These proposed revisions are for the purposes of broadening eligibility for case management and community support services. The current definition does not take into consideration impacts of historical trauma and therefore individuals with PTSD related to such trauma are not eligible for critical services like adult mental health targeted case management (AMH-TCM). These case managers play an important role to assess and address significant impacts of the health of the people they serve, and this legislative change would ensure they have access to this care.

Indigenous people have experienced trauma from war, death, stolen land, broken treaties, suppression of their spiritual beliefs, forcible removal of children from their families, tribe and culture, and systemic racism. Federal Indian law and policy during the removal, reservation system, allotment and assimilation and termination eras are documented, painful chapters in US history.

Indigenous people have also experienced high rates of out-of-home placement in child welfare proceedings as a result of various state practices and federal policy designed to destroy the Indian family's core and connection to their tribe, including their language and culture. It also stems from federal policy on boarding schools.

Despite the First Amendment freedom of religion guarantees, Indigenous people were targeted for punishment when they practiced their religious beliefs.<sup>1</sup> In 1978, Congress passed the Indian Child Welfare Act and the American Indian Religious Act, yet intergenerational trauma, racial trauma and unresolved historical grief continues to affect many of our people to this day. As recently as 2022, the US Department of Interior acknowledged the intergenerational trauma caused by federal boarding school policies.<sup>2</sup>

The Community's mental health case managers frequently come across intergenerational trauma, racial trauma, or unresolved historical grief as a basis for patient mental health concerns and should be able to provide case management services related to this diagnosis. **Since 2023, forty-three (43) percent of adults seeking mental health services in coordination with our mental health case managers were due to intergenerational trauma, racial trauma or unresolved historical grief.** Your support of this bill would help mental health targeted case managers support Minnesota's medical assistance population on their path toward healing from intergenerational trauma, racial trauma and unresolved historical grief. I appreciate your support of passing Senate File 1953 that helps address the mental health needs within Minnesota.

Pidamayado,

Robert L. Larsen  
President  
Lower Sioux Indian Community

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<sup>1</sup> 1883 Code of Indian Offenses

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi\\_secretarial\\_cover\\_letter\\_esb46-007491\\_signed\\_508.pdf](https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_secretarial_cover_letter_esb46-007491_signed_508.pdf)