

Senator John Hoffman, Chair
Human Services Committee
Minnesota State Senate

March 24th, 2025

Via EMAIL only

Dear Chair Hoffman and Committee Members:

On behalf of Fraser, I am writing in support of Senate File 2647.

Fraser is a Minnesota non-profit providing services to individuals with disabilities since 1935. In 2024 Fraser became a certified community behavioral health center (CCBHC). This designation allows us to integrate substance use disorder services into our community mental health clinic.

SF 2647 helps expand access to substance use disorder treatment and increase efficiencies for our precious licensed clinical staff by allowing them to work at the top of their licenses and integrate across mental health and substance use disorder care.

We employ licensed mental health professionals and LADCs, among a full staff spectrum, across our service lines. In this workforce shortage and service access shortage, we need to expand access to treatment for our clients and be able to best use our clinicians' time. However, in a Medical Assistance licensed SUD program under MN Statutes Sec. 245G, only licensed alcohol and drug counselors (LADCs) are authorized to provide treatment.

The field of substance use disorder is going through changes – integrated services models, the onset of ASAM criteria and we are seeing the need for substance use disorder treatment increase exponentially coming out of the pandemic. Individuals are needing more treatment and are more acutely sick. All this change is happening while we are in an access crisis for substance use disorder treatment and care. Agencies and programs are shrinking or shuttering their services out of lack of workforce and sustainable reimbursements. The ones remaining are trying to keep up with long waiting lists and backed up appointments.

SF 2647 works to address/ alleviate some of these challenges by expanding capacity within licensed 245G programs in Medical Assistance:

- Also allowing licensed mental health professionals, clinical trainees and licensed registered nurses – who have the individual licensed clinical scope - to provide comprehensive assessments – a critical step in starting treatment and a known backlog point of access
- Expanding qualifications to be a treatment coordinator

- Conducting a study on removing the limits on licensed health professionals' ability to provide substance use disorder treatment services when they have the individual clinical scope.

Thank you for yours and the legislature's good work for our mental health and substance use disorder system. I encourage you to support SF 2647 as a next step to integrating care around all of our clients and communities and ensuring access to treatment services for Minnesotans.

Sincerely,



Abby Vavra
Public Policy and Compliance Counsel