

March 31, 2025



Minnesota Senate  
Senate Taxes Committee  
RE: Senate File 1402

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stdavidscenter.org

Dear Chair Rest and Committee Members:

**I am writing to you today to request your support for Senate File 1402.**

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 critically needed services for children and families, including mental health services.

I am writing today on behalf of the mental health provider community across our state, which are serving Minnesota's most at risk children and families. Our organizations are literally the safety net for those who have experienced deep end trauma and have been rejected by other settings that don't have services in place to help them. We offer a continuum of interventions from outpatient clinics to intensive day treatment to residential treatment centers. We offer services that can prevent children from being hospitalized and /or we are where they go after hospitalization as they work thru 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 a 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.

We do this work under the broken payment structure of the Medicaid system which has gone without rate increases for the last decade. We simply must provide access to high quality mental health care to children and families with the highest need and yet we are buckling under a rate structure that has not kept pace with cost of providing services. We can't retain the kind of high-quality staff needed if we cannot pay adequately.

I want to thank you for considering support of SF1402 which will establish a new assessment to generate revenue for mental health rate increases in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Sjordal", written in a cursive style.

Julie Sjordal  
St. David's Chief Executive Officer