THERAPEUTIC SERVICES AGENCY Inc.
Hope Realized
220 Railroad Street SE, Pine City, MN 55063
Phone: 320-629-7600 or 651-224-4114 | Fax: 651-925-0071

To: Honorable Chair Klein and Members of the Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee
Date: March 16, 2026
RE: SF 4018
FROM: Lainie Janke, MSW, LICSW – Executive Director

Lainie Janke, MSW, LICSW

Dear Honorable Chair Klein and Members of the Commerce and Consumer Protection Policy Committee-

I am writing to express strong support for legislation that recognizes and supports clinical trainees in mental health as essential contributors to Minnesota's mental health care system. As our state continues to face a significant shortage of mental health professionals, clinical trainees play a critical role in expanding access to care and strengthening the service continuum for communities across Minnesota.

Clinical trainees—including graduate interns, practicum students, and post-graduate supervisees—deliver a substantial amount of direct mental health services in community clinics, hospitals, schools, and nonprofit organizations. As defined in Chapter 245I, under appropriate supervision, these trainees provide high-quality, evidence-based care to individuals and families who might otherwise face long wait times or no access to services at all. Their work is not supplemental; it is a foundational component of how many mental health organizations are able to meet community demand.

Despite the essential care they provide, many current policies limit the ability of organizations to bill for services delivered by trainees, particularly across certain payors, and the existing 20% drawback of payment for services rendered by clinical trainees also limits the ability of organizations. This creates significant financial strain for mental health providers and reduces the number of training opportunities available for the next generation of clinicians. When organizations cannot sustainably support trainees, the entire workforce pipeline is weakened. Legislation in SF4018 codifes current practice in 62Q to be explicitly inclusive of those who are enrolled in commercial health plans – creating certainty for clients, payors and providers.

Legislation that formally recognizes clinical trainees as integral members of the mental health service continuum—and allows for inclusive, fully funded billing capacity across all payors—is a critical step toward addressing Minnesota's workforce shortage and improving access to care. Ensuring that services provided by trainees can be billed and reimbursed appropriately will:

Therapeutic Services Agency, Inc.
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- Strengthen the mental health workforce pipeline
- Expand access to services for underserved communities
- Support sustainability for community mental health providers
- Reduce waitlists and service gaps across the state

Investing in trainees is an investment in Minnesota's future mental health workforce. By ensuring inclusive reimbursement policies and fully funding the services trainees provide under supervision, the Legislature can help build a stronger, more accessible mental health system for all Minnesotans.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to improving mental health care in our state. I respectfully urge you to support legislation (SF4018) that recognizes clinical trainees as vital providers within the mental health continuum and ensures their services are reimbursable across all payors.