Minnesota Medical Association

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Dear Members of the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), we write to express our support for SF 1856. The MMA has long been engaged in efforts to reform prior authorization processes, including advancing significant legislation in 2024. While much of that law has now taken effect, one important issue remained unaddressed: the use of artificial intelligence in utilization review processes, including prior authorization determinations.

Any adverse determination regarding patient care must be made by a qualified health care provider in the same or a similar specialty, not by a computer algorithm that may deny or delay necessary treatment. These are complex clinical decisions that require medical judgment, context, and accountability.

Prior authorization continues to be one of the most significant sources of frustration for both patients and physicians. Approximately 70 percent of patients report that prior authorization is burdensome, with many identifying it as a primary barrier to receiving care. Among physicians, 94 percent report that prior authorization requirements delay access to necessary treatment, and 82 percent indicate that such delays result in patients abandoning recommended care altogether due to administrative obstacles.

Even more concerning, nearly one in four physicians report that prior authorization has led to a serious adverse event for a patient, including hospitalization, permanent impairment, or death. These outcomes underscore the urgency of ensuring that medical necessity determinations are made by trained health care professionals, not automated systems.

SF 1856 takes an important step toward safeguarding patient care by reinforcing the role of qualified clinicians in utilization review decisions. We urge your support.

Sincerely,

Lisa R. Mattson MD

Lisa Mattson, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association