Helene Johnson Testimony in Support of SF 4687
Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee
March 27, 2026

Chair Klein and Committee Members,

My name is Helene Johnson and I live in Golden Valley. I testified before this committee last year to share my experience as a fraud victim of the Woodbury Dental Arts scandal and tell you all how a restitution fund would create a road forward for individuals like me. Thank you for listening to my story and for your efforts to create the Consumer Protection Restitution Account last session. This law is special to me. I've been involved since the beginning of the process and it is great to see "my baby" in action.

After breaking my teeth in 2023, I embarked on an exhaustive search for a reputable dentist to perform implants. I finally chose Dr. Kamel and Woodbury Dental Arts because of their reputation. I was told I needed to pay upfront and spent six months securing loans from family and friends in order to proceed. During those six months, Dr. Kamel's dental license was suspended, and he informed no one. I was devastated to learn that the clinic had closed in March 2024 with no notice. I found out through the news, leaving me and many other patients out of thousands of dollars even after efforts to get the money back from Dr. Kamel. The money was gone and I was out an incredible $15,000. Further, I now had to find and pay another dental specialist to finish the process.

This experience was devastating and left me with immense stress, which affected my life activities and emotional health. I was fortunate to have had some of my treatment almost completed, but others were not as lucky, and we had no clear way to recover. However, through the Consumer Protection Restitution Account, I was able to apply for restitution and am on track to recover from my losses, which will finally lift a heavy weight off my shoulders.

SF 4687 ensures more victims like me can find relief from these horrible scams. These situations are frightening and especially difficult for seniors like me. Fraud crimes are not going away and are leaving many vulnerable, so victims of all kinds should be able to find recovery. The bill sets a maximum restitution limit to ensure that the fund is not completely depleted by a small handful who may have lost millions of dollars but instead can help the many victims who need relief from losses like mine. I urge you to support SF 4687 so the account can support Minnesotans like me many years into the future. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Helene Johnson, Golden Valley