



March 10, 2015

Representative Tara Mack
545 State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Mack and Members of the HHS Reform Committee:

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), I write to offer a note of caution as you consider bills such as HF 439, a bill set to be heard by the House HHS Reform Committee.

The MMA appreciates the intent in ensuring patients have the best information prior to any medical treatment or diagnostic testing. Prenatal diagnostic testing is a valuable tool for both physicians and families. Education about the impact, meaning, and interpretation of diagnostic testing is a central role that physicians and other health care providers play.

The MMA's concern with this proposal, and with any proposal that mandates in statute the type of information that must be provided, is based upon the interference the bill imposes on the physician-patient relationship. A physician-patient relationship is absolutely central to the provision of quality health care. Mandating in state statute the type of information and communication that must be shared with patients - even clinically sound information crafted by a neutral party - serves to undermine the trust upon which the physician-patient relationship must be built. Such statutory requirements can also limit the quality of information provided to patients, as medical research is constantly changing. The MMA believes that patients are best served when physicians are allowed to communicate with patients free of statutory mandates on what must and what must not be said or given to patients.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Donald Jacobs, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association

CC: Rep. Kathy Lohmer