



May 4, 2020

Representative Rena Moran, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services Policy
575 State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Debra Kiel, Republican Lead
Committee on Health and Human Services Policy
255 State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Chair Moran and Representative Kiel,

The Minnesota Academy of Physician Assistants (MAPA) represents and advocates for the over 3,400 physician assistants (PAs) that practice in Minnesota. Last year PAs provided care during 10 million Minnesota patient visits. On behalf of Minnesota's PAs, we are writing to thank you for including the provisions of H.F. 3402 (Schultz, Kiel, Moran, Tabke, Hornstein) in DE1 amendment to H.F. 3272, the omnibus HHS policy bill.

Minnesota is facing a growing shortage of clinicians that can provide primary and specialty care. This shortage is greatest in rural Minnesota, but there are populations in the Metro area also facing challenges in receiving care on a timely basis due to provider shortages. Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, these shortages have been exacerbated.

Health care systems seeking to "ramp up" their staffing in order to be prepared for a COVID surge have been frustrated in hiring PAs because of the existing outdated and unneeded paperwork requirements in Minnesota law. Current regulation of PAs is based on the care delivery model of the 1960's – solo practice physicians running their own clinics. That model is nearly extinct in Minnesota as physicians are now almost entirely employed by health systems.

H.F. 3402 maintains physician oversight of PAs, but shifts oversight from an individual "supervising" physician to the practice setting. This change will facilitate PAs getting hired by health systems and will directly increase access to needed care in both the Metro and well as rural Minnesota.

We respectfully request that you support the A10 amendment to the bill when you begin considering amendments. The A10 amendment maintains the ability of PAs to continue caring for patients with mental health concerns without excessive burdensome paperwork and worsening already strained psychiatry resources. This amendment has just been drafted in the past 24 hours in response to discussions held over the weekend between by PAs, other mental health providers and advocates.

Again, thank you for including H.F. 3402 in your bill.

Sincerely,

Leslie Milteer PA-C, MPAS Legislative Co-Chair
MN Academy of PAs