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March 10, 2022

Chair Julie Rosen
Minnesota State Senate Finance Committee
2113 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Rosen and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of Mayo Clinic, I write to extend support for SF 3372, authored by Sen. David Tomassoni, to appropriate funds to further advance scientific research related to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Mayo Clinic is a committed partner to further developing the science and care outcomes related to this aggressive disease and to honoring Sen. Tomassoni's goal to advance ALS research.

Often referred to as Lou Gehrig's Disease after the baseball legend received his [diagnosis](#) at Mayo Clinic in 1939, ALS is a progressive nervous system disease that ultimately leads to muscle control loss as nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord deteriorate. While significant efforts have been made to understand the disease and current developments seek to evolve the care for our patients, there is significant potential to further investigate the disease to bring transformational change and treatment for our patients who live with ALS.

Mayo Clinic has a robust multidisciplinary focus on addressing the current and future needs of patients with ALS and is a recognized epicenter of ALS research. Mayo Clinic's ALS (ALSA Certified Center of Excellence) clinic has the honor to provide care to 150 patients across the upper Midwest annually, and we serve several hundred other patients a year who travel to Mayo Clinic for confirmation of diagnosis and additional consultation. To best be able to serve our patients, Mayo Clinic seeks to identify transformational clinical change from innovative research. Current ALS efforts include but are not limited to developing mesenchymal stem cells as a therapy for ALS. Clinical trials are underway to understand the effectiveness and potential for this potential therapy. We are also using Artificial Intelligence to develop models of diagnosis and progression in ALS, and have ongoing basic scientific studies that aim to understand ALS and advance novel therapies. Additionally, Mayo Clinic is proud to partner and be involved in several multi-center research studies of ALS and are active in national and international consortia. We currently have four active clinical trials in ALS and anticipate three more to start later this year. Additional funding would further unleash the potential of Mayo's groundbreaking work to treat, cure and support patients living with this devastating disease.

As we look to the future, we recognize that ALS has a significant impact not only on our patients but also on families and our communities. SF 3372 provides essential resources to support the innovation needed to bring hope and healing to the patients and families affected by this disease. Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this bill and the promise it offers to those affected by ALS.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nathan P. Staff".

Nathan P. Staff, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor and Vice Chair for Research, Department of Neurology
Director, Mayo Clinic ALSA-Certified ALS Treatment Center of Excellence