

March 21, 2016

Senator Melissa Wiklund
90 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Building, Suite Rm. 2409
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Wiklund:

As the state's largest provider of pediatric care, Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota supports Senate File 37/House File 978, the genetic counseling licensing bill.

Children's Minnesota is the only genetics clinic in Minnesota that focuses entirely on caring for kids with genetic conditions. With one of the largest programs in the region, we currently employ twelve genetic counselors and provide approximately 6,000 genetic counseling appointments to over 2,000 children and teens each year.

Our genetic counselors play a critical role in our ability to deliver high-quality, family-centered care. They can identify the genetic diagnosis in order to aid medical treatment and help find answers that explains a child's differences. Genetic conditions can cause many different symptoms that at first seem unrelated, but a unifying diagnosis explains them all. Our counselors work with our patients and families on the diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment of genetic conditions-from the very common to the most complex and rare-and they work with patients and families every step of the way.

Senate File 37/House File 978 would establish a level of accountability and elevate the industry to the levels of other health care providers in the state. Licensure will help patients identify qualified individuals to provide genetic counseling services and increase access to competent, high-quality care, which is why we support Senate File 37/House File 978.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on this important proposal. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Nancy J. Mendelsohn, MD
Senior Medical Director, Ambulatory Specialty Care
Clinical Geneticist