



Legal Services Advocacy Project

February 9, 2021

The Honorable Mike Freiberg
Chair, Preventive Health Policy Division
Minnesota House of Representatives
381 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Glenn Gruenhagen
Republican Lead, Preventive Health Policy Division
Minnesota House of Representatives
287 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Robert Bierman
Vice Chair, Preventive Health Policy Division
Minnesota House of Representatives
579 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF 521

Dear Chair Freiberg, Vice Chair Bierman, Lead Gruenhagen, and Members of the Committee:

The Legal Services Advocacy Project (LSAP) LSAP writes to express its strong support for HF 521, which extends Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 365 days postpartum. LSAP provides legislative and administrative policy advocacy on behalf of Legal Aid, which provides free civil legal services, statewide, for low-income clients, all elder Minnesotans, and all Minnesotans with disabilities.

HF 521 would offer significant help to the mothers and families Legal Aid represents. The maternal mortality rate is higher in the US than other developed countries. Also, during the COVID-19 pandemic the gaps in coverage and affordability issues have negatively impacted BIPOC communities who are disproportionately suffering from the impact of the virus.

In particular, the expansion of eligibility for Medicaid would allow new mothers to remain eligible for additional postpartum care during a time when they are at risk for complications from the pregnancy and childbirth. The loss of Medicaid eligibility during this critical time results in many women becoming uninsured and unable to access critical health care services.

We thank Rep. Morrison for authoring the bill urge the committee to pass this bill that would significantly improve health outcomes for Legal Aid clients who, absent passage, would be without vital health insurance coverage. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron Elwood".

Ron Elwood
Supervising Attorney