



Representative Jennifer Schultz, Chair  
Human Services Policy and Finance Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
April 6, 2021

Dear Chair Schultz and Committee Members

On behalf of Washburn Center for Children, I am sending this letter to support HOUSE FILE 2127 – omnibus human services budget bill.

Washburn Center for Children's mission is to nurture every child and family's well-being and full potential through transformative children's mental health care. Our expert trauma informed therapeutic care helps children struggling with social, emotional or behavioral challenges such as loss or grief, anxiety, depression, attention deficit disorder, and trauma. With three office locations - Brooklyn Park, Edina and Minneapolis - Washburn Center for Children serves more than 3,700 children and approximately 11,100 family members annually in the Twin Cities metro area. We also offer in-home and community-based services, with our school-based program serving students in 28 schools. More than 75% of children served are from families with low-incomes.

As a community behavioral health center and safety net provider Washburn Center for Children serves clients and communities who otherwise would not have access to mental health care.

We thank you and the Committee for including critical provisions to sustaining mental health and substance use disorder care, including:

- Proposals to increase services reimbursement and support – Adult and Children's mental health grant funds, culturally responsive rate increase for substance use treatment
- Proposals to address mental health workforce diversity and equity
- Proposals to address regulatory alignment and streamlining in Mental Health Uniform Service Standards (USS) and SUD paperwork reduction

Specifically, we thank the Chair, Committee Members and Bill Authors for moving provisions in the behavioral health services. These include several recently agreed upon or resolved proposals across stakeholders –

- Allowing support and information from families and loved ones of someone in mental health crisis responses
- Providing for community mental health centers ability to offer as much support from doctoral mental health professionals as they can while recognizing long-standing workforce shortages and challenges.



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This has been a good process of bringing together stakeholders from the Department of Human Services, the provider community, counties and the advocacy community come together to work on this proposal with the shared end goal of improving access to high quality services for Minnesotans. We look forward to continuing the collaboration as this omnibus bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,



Tom Steinmetz  
CEO  
Washburn Center for Children

