



March 3, 2021

Professional Distinction

Personal Dignity

Patient Advocacy

Representative Liebling
Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Representative Liebling and Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee:

With 22,000 members, the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) is the largest voice for professional nursing in the State of Minnesota. We are a leader in both the labor and health care communities and a voice for our members on issues relating to the professional, economic, and general well-being of nurses and in promoting the health and well-being of the public. On behalf of all our nurses who work at the Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC), we write to express our support for HF 1609, a bill that would help stabilize funding for HCMC.

Hennepin Healthcare System is the largest Medicaid provider and safety-net hospital in Minnesota. As such, the patient population there includes a higher percentage of low-income, un-/underemployed, and uninsured than any other hospital. A significant number of patients do not have personal funds or insurance to pay for their care. Add to this the fact that Medicaid reimburses at a lower rate than commercial plans, which creates a situation where the care can cost a lot of money. HF 1609 will allow HHS to take advantage of a federal funding mechanism passed in 2016 that can help stabilize the financial situation at HHS at no cost to the state.

In an era of consolidation of health care and hospital systems, and the further corporatization of health care, HCMC is an important outpost for quality, patient care. In order to make sure that HCMC remains publicly owned and able to serve this diverse population, we need to make sure that it is adequately funded. We need a healthcare system that puts patients before profits and ensures that people have access to quality, affordable care in the community in which they live. We need a system that puts patients first; and this bill is one of the many steps that need to be taken to achieve that goal.

Please support this funding stream which would provide much-needed support to Minnesota's safety-net hospital and vote yes on HF 1609.

Sincerely,

HCMC Bargaining Unit Chairs and Stewards:

Janelle Johnson-Thiele - Chair
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Sarah Simons – Chair
Michelle Will - Steward

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