

1/23/24

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Dear Mr. Sande and Members of the
House of Representatives Health
Finance and Policy Committee

I am Dr. Gordon Harvieux. I have
been a pediatrician at Essentia
Health in Duluth (legislative district
8B) for the past 29 years. I am
writing to adamantly oppose the
physician-assisted suicide bill (HF
1930).

As a pediatrician, I can say without
hesitation that the number of
children in my practice who require
treatment for depression and
suicidal ideation has increased
dramatically in recent years. This
has obviously worsened during the
pandemic. Hardly a month goes by
that I am not rounding at Miller
Dwan (in the locked psychiatric
ward) on one of my patients who
has attempted or threatened
suicide. Friday in the office, I saw
two teenagers who were suffering
and reported depression and
suicidal ideation. Young people of
northern Minnesota already have
alarming rates of depression and
suicide. If these vulnerable young
people see that the medical

community and the State of Minnesota accept suicide as a viable option, the rates of suicide for our young people will rise, just that they have done in the State of Oregon.

The logic of legalizing physician-assisted suicide is totally counter to the Minnesota efforts to reduce suicide in our state.

Instead of advocating for the legalization of physician-assisted suicide, we should focus our energy on improving services for children and all Minnesotans with mental health problems, improving care for the dying, improving access to high-quality palliative and hospice care, and working to ensure the dignity of all patients.

Thank you to the members of the Minnesota House of Representatives Health Finance and Policy Committee for all that you do for the health and well-being of all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gordon Harvieux