

Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato

Minnesota's Rural Behavioral Health Workforce

- 80% of all Minnesota counties qualify as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.
- According to the Minnesota Department of Health (2022), of the over 25,000 licensed behavioral health professionals, 90% practice in metropolitan or large town areas.
- Minnesota Department of Health (2021) data indicate a ratio of one behavioral health provider for every 2,835 people in metropolitan areas while in Minnesota's rural areas, the ratio grows to one provider for every 13,519 people.
- Rural behavioral health professionals are, on average, older and closer to retirement (MDH 2022).

Mental Health Challenges in Rural Minnesota

- 2022 Minnesota Student Survey data from the Minnesota Department of Education report that 29% of students report "long-term mental health problems." However, when broken down geographically, you find that regions outside the metro have a higher percentage of students who report long-term mental health problems, 34% average (outstate) to 28% average (metro).
- Rural residents face higher rates of mental health symptoms (Centers for Disease Control, 2017 & National Advisory Committee on Rural Health, 2017).
- Farmers are nearly two times more likely to die by suicide when compared to all other occupations in the US (Centers for Disease Control, 2020).

How HF 586 Will Help Greater Minnesota

- The one-time funding request will allow the Center for Rural Behavioral Health to establish a community facing academic health center (mental health training clinic) at Minnesota State University, Mankato (MSUM). Operations will be sustained through third party reimbursement and existing external grant opportunities through the state and federal government.
- The training clinic will provide an incredible workforce development opportunity and allow the students of the five academic programs that lead to behavioral health licensure at MSUM to train on campus while increasing the capacity of enrollments within those programs that are often restricted due to lack of external training sites.
- Through providing care to the uninsured, underinsured, and participants of the Medical Assistance program, the training clinic will provide a much-needed resource for the Mankato region.



February 7, 2023

Representative Mohamud Noor
Chair, Human Services Finance Committee
379 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF586 (Frederick) Minnesota State University, Mankato Community Behavioral Health Center Appropriation

Dear Chair Noor and committee members,

Created in 1994, the MRHA has grown to be a recognized advocate for rural health in Minnesota. Our mission is to improve the health of rural Minnesotans through education, advocacy, and by fostering cooperative partnerships. We work decisionmakers to share how decisions they make affect the quality of health care provided in rural Minnesota.

I am writing today in support of HF586 (Frederick): Minnesota State University, Mankato Community Behavioral Health Center funding to establish a mental health training clinic.

By every statistical measure, the mental wellbeing of Minnesotans has never been worse. This is coming at a time in which access to behavioral health services has never been more difficult. As this treatment gap between consumers and providers continues to grow, it's important to note that it is not geographically equitable. While residents of rural Minnesota have the same emotional challenges of the metro area, they have fewer providers who are trained to help.

The Center for Rural Behavioral Health training clinic would provide a workforce development opportunity that would help grow the number of behavioral health professionals who will serve the current, and next generation of rural Minnesotans. At the same time, this community facing training clinic would help meet an unmet need of providing mental healthcare services for the residents of southern Minnesota.

While H.F. 586 won't solve all the mental health challenges facing rural Minnesota, it will go a long way to ensure that those who call rural Minnesota home, will have access to mental healthcare when they need it.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to share our support of funding for the development of a training clinic through the Center for Rural Behavioral Health. If you have any questions regarding MRHA's position, feel free to contact me at mark@mnruralhealth.org or 218-201-0098.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Jones", written over a white background.

Mark Jones
Executive Director



February 7, 2023

To members of the Honorable 93rd State of Minnesota Legislature,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Southern Agricultural Center for Excellence to support Minnesota H.F. 586, which would appropriate funding to the Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato to establish a mental health training clinic.

Statistically, the mental wellbeing of Minnesotans has never been worse. This is coming at a time in which access to behavioral health services has never been more difficult. As this treatment gap between consumers and providers continues to grow, it's important to note that it is not geographically equitable. While residents of greater Minnesota face similar emotional challenges of residents of the metro area, they have fewer providers who are trained to help.

The impact of poor mental health on the agricultural community cannot be understated. The success of our agricultural partners requires a physical and emotionally healthy workforce. Farmers need local resources available for their employees and their families. Minnesota is already a leader in providing innovative ways to reach agricultural producers and their families through such longtime programs as the state's two rural mental health specialists, a program which was renewed with increased funding in the 92nd State of Minnesota's 2022 Regular Session's agricultural appropriations. But, we can and should do more to reach rural Minnesotan's behavioral health needs.

The Center for Rural Behavioral Health training clinic would provide a workforce development opportunity that would help grow the number of behavioral health professionals who will serve the current, and next generation of Minnesotans. At the same time, this community facing training clinic would help meet an unmet need of providing mental healthcare services for the residents of southern Minnesota.

While H.F. 586 won't solve all the mental health challenges facing our state, it will go a long way to ensure that those who call greater Minnesota home, will have access to mental healthcare when they need it.

Sincerely,

Megan Roberts, Ed. D.
Executive Director, Southern Agricultural Center of Excellence

February 6, 2023

To members of the Honorable 93rd State of Minnesota Legislature,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health to support Minnesota H.F. 586, which would appropriate funding to the Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato to establish a mental health training clinic.

By every statistical measure, the mental wellbeing of Minnesotan's children has never been worse. This is coming at a time in which access to behavioral health services has never been more difficult. As this treatment gap between consumers and providers continues to grow, it's important to note that it is not geographically equitable. While children of greater Minnesota have the same emotional challenges of the metro area, they have fewer providers who are trained to help.

The Center for Rural Behavioral Health training clinic would provide a workforce development opportunity that would help grow the number of behavioral health professionals who will serve the current, and next generation of Minnesotans. At the same time, this community-facing training clinic would help meet an unmet need of providing mental healthcare services for the children of southern Minnesota.

While H.F. 586 won't solve all the mental health challenges facing our state, it will go a long way to ensure that the children and families who call greater Minnesota home, will have access to mental healthcare when they need it.

Thank you,



Brandon Jones, M.A., CPPM

He/Him

Executive Director

Office Number: 651-789-8626 | [Email: bjones@macmh.org](mailto:bjones@macmh.org)

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

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February 6, 2023

House Human Services Finance Committee

Chair Mohamud Noor

379 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

Chair Noor and members of the committee,

Minnesota's pig farmers and the Minnesota Pork Producers Association strongly supports H.F. 586, appropriating funding to the Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato to establish a mental health training clinic.

Pig farmers know first-hand the importance and foundational value mental health and wellbeing brings to our farms, our families, our employees, and our rural communities. By every statistical measure, the mental wellbeing of Minnesotans has never been worse. This is only exacerbated by a lack of access to behavioral health services and providers. As this treatment gap between consumers and providers continues to grow, it's important to recognize it is not geographically equitable in our state. While residents of greater Minnesota have similar emotional challenges to those in the metro area, they have fewer providers who are trained to help and provide this increasingly important care. Minnesota pig farmers strongly believe in the value of investing in the development of people and ask for your support in doing the same.

The impact of poor mental health on the agricultural community cannot be understated. The success of our farms, agricultural partners and rural communities requires a physical and emotionally healthy workforce. We need additional resources in greater Minnesota communities. The Center for Rural Behavioral Health training clinic would provide a workforce development opportunity growing the number of behavioral health professionals who will serve the current, and next generation of Minnesotans. At the same time, this community facing training clinic would help address an unmet need of providing mental healthcare services for the residents of southern Minnesota.

While H.F. 586 will not solve all the mental health challenges facing our state, it will go a long way to ensuring those who call greater Minnesota home, will have access to mental healthcare when they need it. Thank you for your consideration and support of this critical need in rural Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Anderson".

John Anderson
President, Minnesota Pork Producers Association

February 6, 2023

To members of the Honorable 93rd State of Minnesota Legislature,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Greater Mankato Area United Way to support Minnesota H.F. 586, which would appropriate funding to the Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato to establish a mental health training clinic.

By every statistical measure, the mental wellbeing of Minnesotans has never been worse. This is coming at a time in which access to behavioral health services has never been more difficult. As this treatment gap between consumers and providers continues to grow, it is important to note that it is not geographically equitable. While residents of greater Minnesota have the same emotional challenges of the metro area, they have fewer providers who are trained to help.

This past year, Greater Mankato Area United Way convened a group of stakeholders to examine the issues around youth mental health and substance use. While many contributing factors were discussed as issues, access to behavioral healthcare for our youth was identified as the single greatest barrier to developing an emotionally healthy and resilient community for our young people.

The Center for Rural Behavioral Health training clinic would provide a workforce development opportunity that would help grow the number of behavioral health professionals who will serve the current, and next generation of Minnesotans. At the same time, this community facing training clinic would help meet an unmet need of providing mental healthcare services for the residents of southern Minnesota.

While H.F. 586 will not solve all the mental health challenges facing our state, it will go a long way to ensure that those who call greater Minnesota home, will have access to mental healthcare when they need it.

Thank you,



Elizabeth Harstad
Director of Community Impact

February 6, 2023

To members of the Honorable 93rd State of Minnesota Legislature,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the 15,000 Minnesota State University, Mankato students to support Minnesota H.F. 586, which would appropriate funding to the Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato to establish a mental health training clinic.

By every statistical measure, the mental wellbeing of Minnesota's college students has never been worse. This is coming at a time in which access to behavioral health services on our campuses has never been more difficult. This gap between students who need care, and the trained providers of that care, continues to grow with each passing semester. When students are not able to attend to their mental health, it impacts their ability to focus on their coursework which often leads them to do poorly and in far too many instances, not complete their college education.

The Center for Rural Behavioral Health training clinic would provide an incredible educational and professional opportunity for students studying mental health, while growing the number of behavioral health professionals who will serve the current, and next generation of Minnesotans. At the same time, this training clinic would add an incredible asset to provide mental healthcare for the 15,000 students who are enrolled at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

While H.F. 586 won't solve all the mental health challenges facing college students and the southern Minnesota community, but it will go a long way to ensure that those who call the second largest university in the state home, will have access to mental healthcare when they need it.

Thank you,



Emma Zellmer
90th Student Government President
Minnesota State University, Mankato

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO