



The Kid Experts™

April 7, 2022
House Health Policy and Finance Committee

Dear Chair Liebling and Committee Members,

On behalf of Children's Minnesota, I am writing to offer comments on several provisions in HF4706. Children's Minnesota is the state's largest pediatric provider of health care, seeing over 135,000 patients last year alone. We see children and teens from all 87 counties and 60 percent of the counties in our surrounding states. We serve an incredibly diverse patient population and 46 percent of our patients are insured through Medicaid. Because of the diversity of patients we see, we know the unique and varied challenges Minnesota children face.

First, thank you for including our request for 22 additional mental health beds in this omnibus bill (HF3470, Her). These beds are a crucial step in addressing the mental health crisis among our kids. In addition to the behavioral health services we already provide, this fall Children's Minnesota is opening a new, inpatient mental health unit in our St. Paul hospital. In 2021, we had to transfer over 850 children to other facilities for inpatient mental health care. This new unit will ensure that kids with acute mental health needs and complex medical conditions will be able to receive high-quality, comprehensive care at Children's Minnesota.

HF4706 also includes several important provisions that would benefit the patients and families served by Children's Minnesota:

- Providing continuous MA eligibility for children (HF4576, Liebling)
- Expanding the Community Health Worker workforce (HF4398, Liebling);
- Creating universal voluntary family home visiting services for every infant (HF3886, Morrison);
- Improving treatment of intractable pain (HF3786, Bierman);
- Prohibiting white-bagging (HF3280, Freiberg)
- Establishing the community solutions for healthy child development grant program (HF4398, Liebling / HF4099, Moran)
- Improving the definition of palliative care (HF3158, Reyer) and funding the Minnesota Palliative Care Advisory Council (HF2517, Reyer);
- Improving the Cancer Reporting System (HF3871, Morrison); and
- Various provisions to improve the health care workforce including expansions of the health professional education loan forgiveness program and mental health workforce initiatives.

At Children's Minnesota, our vision is to be every family's essential partner in raising healthier children. As the kid experts in our community, it is our goal to improve the health and wellbeing of kids in our state. We thank the committee for including provisions that will address kids' mental health and overall wellbeing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Jansen".

Amanda Jansen, MPP
Director of Public Policy
Children's Minnesota