



January 16, 2023

Submitted Written Testimony for January 17, 2023, Legislative Hearing on HF 52

Minnesota House Health Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Madam Chair and Members,

Citizens' Council for Health Freedom (CCHF) exists to protect patient freedom and doctor freedom. As an organization that seeks to advocate for patient-centered policies, **CCHF supports HF 52** and thanks Rep. Richardson for bringing the bill forward. We are pleased that HF 52 requires all health care providers and facilities to “allow, at a minimum, one designated support person of a pregnant patient’s choosing to be physically present while the patient is receiving health care services including during a hospital stay.”

In the fall of 2022, our staff received a call from a soon-to-be grandmother desperate because both she and her son-in-law were barred by the hospital administration from being present at her grandson’s birth. Her daughter was forced to undergo labor alone, without the previously planned support of either her husband or mother. CCHF believes that no patient should be forced to be alone during hospitalization.

Hospitalization is a vulnerable and fearful time for most patients. They are already experiencing a physical ailment that may make it difficult for them to advocate for themselves or fully comprehend treatment explanations. The ability to have a designated support person in the room or at the bedside in the busy hospital setting mitigates potential risks. That individual can also serve as a communicator, if needed, on behalf of the patient. In addition, an advocate who knows the patient personally provides much needed comfort during a difficult season.

CCHF believes that no patient should have to stay, suffer, or die alone. Any patient, whether they are a pregnant woman or hospitalized due to cancer, whether an adult or a child, should be allowed at least one designated support person. Hospitalization should not equate to isolation. No patient should be forced to experience the difficulties and potential trauma of hospitalization alone. And no soon-to-be mother should be separated from her husband, her significant other, or her chosen support person.

Thus, we strongly urge a yes vote on HF 52 — with a request that the language be expanded to all patients, not just women who are pregnant. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Twila Brase, RN, PHN
President and Co-founder