



April 6, 2021

Representative Tina Liebling
Chair, House Health Finance and Policy Committee
477 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Omnibus Health Finance Bill, House File 2128

Chair Liebling and Members of the Health Finance Committee,

On behalf of the Medical Alley Association's more than 600 members, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to provide input on House File 2128. Medical Alley Association acknowledges the difficult decisions facing this committee and appreciates the dedication and commitment it will take to come to an agreement on the Health and Human Services omnibus bill with the Senate and the Governor. Below are a few provisions Medical Alley Association is pleased to support, as well as some we have concerns with.

Support

Extension of MA Coverage for Pregnant Women

The Medical Alley Association strongly supports extending postpartum coverage for Medicaid patients from 60 days to 180 days, though we strongly urge the committee to increase this to a full year. Every woman, regardless of their background or location, should have access to equal maternal health and care services. The language included in this bill takes a strong step toward improving access to maternal and infant health.

Medical Alley Association also supports education on anti-racism and implicit bias which advances the goal of providing high quality and equitable care for all mothers and babies in Minnesota. Reducing health disparities is a goal that the Medical Alley Association shares with this body, one our association and membership continues to prioritize.

Telehealth

We thank the author for including key provisions from H.F. 1412 in the Health Finance omnibus bill. Changing the definition of originating site to the location of the patient when they receive telehealth services is an important change to allow for more access to telehealth services when and where a patient needs it. Clarifying the coverage of telemonitoring is another important component of the telehealth legislation that we are pleased to see included in the omnibus bill.

In the telehealth article, we would appreciate seeing the following changes. Amending the definition of telehealth to something a bit less prescriptive, similar to the definition of telehealth in H.F. 1411. Adding language that clarifies that value-based payment arrangements are not subject to payment parity under this legislation is important to our association. Additionally, we would appreciate seeing the language removed that prevents a health carrier from providing incentives for utilizing telehealth services; while not right for everyone, telehealth can be a convenient and cost-effective option for some patients.



Concerns

Excessive Drug Price Increases

Medical Alley Association has concerns with the language from H.F. 1183 that specifically targets generic manufacturers. The association understands the overall intent of the bill author but think it is important to focus on bad actors without stifling overall production of generic pharmaceuticals.

Generic manufacturers already experience negative growth in a competitive market. This type of legislation will have a chilling effect on the growth of companies headquartered in Minnesota. These companies provide high paying jobs to hundreds of Minnesotans throughout the state and further strengthen our state's innovation and economic development. This legislation will have unintended consequences on the generic market and have a negative impact on the future cost of prescription drugs as we see more high-priced brand drugs come into the generic market. Ultimately, though well intentioned, we do not believe this legislation will improve patient access or outcomes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on H.F. 2128. Medical Alley Association looks forward to ongoing discussions on this legislation, and our staff and members stand ready to answer questions and work toward solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Lilly Melander'.

Lilly Melander
State Policy and Advocacy Director
Medical Alley Association