April 12, 2016

The Honorable Members of the House

Committee on Health and Human Services Finance

Minnesota State Office Building

Dear Representatives,

The Minnesota Public Health Association (MPHA) is a statewide association of public health professionals dedicated to creating a healthier Minnesota through effective public health practice and engaged citizens. On behalf of MPHA, we are writing to express opposition to HF 3374, a bill that among other things would prohibit organizations from receiving funds to provide prepregnancy family planning services.

Unintended pregnancy is a critical public health problem that can have serious consequences for children, families and society. Nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended. Approximately one of eight pregnancies in the United States results in a preterm birth, and infant mortality rates remain high. Moreover, all of these outcomes affect low income individuals, populations of color and American Indians disproportionately. Family planning services can help address these and other public health challenges by providing education, counseling, and medical services.

MPHA supports the provision of pre-pregnancy family planning services by a range of organizations that have a history of providing these services, especially to populations that are disproportionally impacted by unintended pregnancies. Taking away the ability of some organizations to offer prepregnancy family planning services increases the potential for all Minnesotan’s of reproductive age to suffer adverse health outcomes.

 We urge you to vote against HF 3374 so that individuals in need of family planning services can continue to access them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Aggie Leitheiser Cook, RN, MPH

President

Minnesota Public Health Association