February 15, 2017

Representative Debra Kiel

537 State Office Building

St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Senator Nelson

On behalf of the MN Academy of Physician Assistants (MAPA), I am writing in support of H.F. 262, your legislation that creates an Alzheimer’s Disease Working Group.

MAPA is the voice of the over 2,300 PAs (physician assistants) who practice medicine in Minnesota.  The number of PAs in Minnesota is growing rapidly with training programs at Augsburg College, St. Catherine’s University and Bethel

University.   Lower-cost PAs are in great demand as they provide high quality medical care in a variety of settings at a time when there are growing shortages of medical professionals.   Care to patients diagnosed with Alzheimer’s are among the services PAs provide to Minnesota patients.

H.F. 262 is important legislation that will help improve the care received by Minnesota Alzheimer’s patients. A 2011 report “Preparing Minnesota for Alzheimer’s: the Budgetary, Social and Personal Impact” studied the needs of Alzheimer’s patients and the ability of Minnesota to meet those needs. Since that report was released, the needs for services to Alzheimer’s patients have increased as the number of Minnesotans suffering from Alzheimer’s has increased to 91,000. The cost to the State of caring for these patients is projected to increase from $767 million in 2015 to $1 billion in 2025.

Minnesota cannot delay in responding to the growing threat of Alzheimer’s. The Working Group proposed in your legislation will help the State to be better prepared to respond to Alzheimer’s. It will help increase public awareness and understanding of Alzheimer’s, improve early detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer’s, help both direct care workers and family members through training and education and consider the need for improvements in housing services and regulation.

Thank you for introducing this legislation.  Minnesota’s PAs appreciate your leadership on this issue and your commitment to improving the lives of Minnesota patients and families affected by Alzheimer’s.

Sincerely,



Becky Ness, PA-C

President, MAPA