



Wednesday, March 28th, 2018

Dear Members of the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee,

On behalf of thousands of Americans for Prosperity activists across Minnesota, I write in strong support of HF3722, which would submit a waiver request to institute a work requirement for able-bodied, childless, working-age adults on Medicaid.

Minnesota has long been an outlier for the generous eligibility of its government-run healthcare programs. While advocates of these programs laud the coverage they provide, the explosive enrollment – especially following the enactment of Obamacare – has created problems for taxpayers and Medicaid recipients alike. A work requirement would begin to reverse these concerning trends.

Medicaid is the largest single item in the state budget, consuming nearly a third of the budget – and growing. The growth of Medicaid is crowding out other essential priorities such as roads and schools. Absent reform, this budget-buster will lead to cuts to these programs, cuts to Medicaid services, drastic and painful tax increases, or some combination thereof.

However, perhaps worse than the impact the growth of Medicaid is causing to the state budget is the impact on it is having more directly on thousands of Minnesotans. The expansion of Medicaid to able-bodied, childless, working-age adults crowds out the availability of these services to more vulnerable individuals for whom Medicaid was intended such as the elderly, the disabled, and pregnant women.

Moreover, like other welfare programs, the structure of Medicaid robs able-bodied, working-age adults of the dignity of earned success by dis-incentivizing work and higher earnings, lest they lose eligibility and thus benefits. This is in no way a criticism of Medicaid enrollees – such decisions are merely a rational response to the economic incentives of the status quo.

Fortunately, work requirements have a long history of successfully uplifting millions of Americans to better lives. For example, in Maine, the welfare caseload fell by nearly eighty percent in three months after that state instituted work requirements for food stamps.

The federal government recently agreed to waiver requests for Medicaid work requirements in three states, and several others have waivers pending. These approaches represent a significant departure from the broken and unsustainable status quo, while protecting the neediest Americans and preserving the safety net for their well-being.

A flexible Medicaid work requirement, like the one included in HF3722, would be an important first step in healthcare and welfare reform to uplift struggling Minnesotans who, like all people, deserve the dignity of earned success, while also beginning to provide necessary relief to state taxpayers.

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity activists across the state, we applaud the Committee for hearing this legislation and strongly urge its passage.

Sincerely,

Jason Flohrs
State Director - Minnesota
Americans for Prosperity

Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. AFP has more than 3.2 million activists across the nation, a local infrastructure that includes 36 state chapters, and has received financial support from more than 100,000 Americans in all 50 states. For more information, visit www.AmericansForProsperity.org.