

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



Office of Medical Education

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Regarding HF 1436

Dear Representative Liebling and Health Finance and Policy Committee,

I am writing this letter in enthusiastic support of HF 1436 and the programs and funding outlined in the bill which would invest in training and support for mental health professionals, particularly those caring for children, in the state of Minnesota.

I am an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota, and the Pediatric Residency Program Training Director. In my role, I help to oversee the training of over 70% of the practicing pediatricians in the state of Minnesota. I am also a general pediatrician, a role I have had the privilege of holding for 16 years. I have had the great honor to care for children from the time they are a newborn until their teen years, and in my role as a pediatric primary care provider I can assure you that mental health conditions and concerns are increasing, are incredibly serious, and need swift action and investment in services.

Since 2017, I have had the privilege of working with an interprofessional group of University of Minnesota faculty from the departments of Psychiatry, Family Medicine, Nursing, and Pediatrics. Through some initial grants, we have been able to pilot a novel training program which embeds a mental health professional into the primary care pediatric setting to serve as a teacher for primary care providers in realtime. This model of helping primary care providers to have the skills they need to identify and treat mental health conditions in real time holds tremendous promise.

Simply put, improving the skills of pediatricians in caring for mental health conditions will mean better care for children in Minnesota. Earlier diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions means better outcomes. Patients with

ADHD, autism, anxiety, depression, or thoughts of suicide will get the help they need when they need it, instead of waiting for months to get in with a specialist.

The funding and programs outlined in HF 1436 would allow our program, and programs like ours, to continue to expand and improve to better meet the needs of the youngest generation of Minnesotans.

I would be happy to provide additional information or testimony as this bill is considered, and I thank you for being champions for mental health care for children and adolescents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E Borman-Shoap". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Emily Borman-Shoap, MD
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Associate Professor
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