

April 14, 2026

Representative Bliss – Chair
House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee

RE: HF4577, PRO

Dear Chair Bliss and esteemed members of the House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee

My name is Dr. Jessica Nielson and I am writing in support of HF4577 to create a psilocybin therapy pilot program here in Minnesota, based on one of the recommendations of the legislatively created psychedelic medicine task force. I was appointed by the Governor in 2023 and elected to serve as the Chair of the [Psychedelic Medicine Task Force](#) (PMTF), based on my extensive experience doing psychedelic clinical research here in Minnesota where I conducted the first FDA and DEA approved psilocybin clinical trial in the state. The task force submitted our [200 page legislative report](#) last year with recommendations that included creating a therapeutic access program with psilocybin mushrooms. The report thoroughly evaluated their long history of use by Indigenous cultures worldwide, scientific evidence for their safe and effective therapeutic uses across a broad range of difficult to treat mental health conditions, the expansion of access in other states and countries who have legalized regulated access models to fill the gap in currently available treatment options, and policy considerations for implementation of our recommendations.

While the clinical trials with psilocybin are showing extraordinary promise and outperforming currently available treatment options on the path towards FDA approval, we cannot wait for an FDA-approved pharmaceutical version of a treatment that readily exists in nature, has been used safely for thousands of years worldwide by Indigenous cultures, and is already widely used out in the community, including other states like Oregon, Colorado, and New Mexico who have legalized therapeutic access to psilocybin mushrooms.

People are not well. Currently available therapies don't work for everyone, and options that are available can be cost-prohibitive depending on levels of access and insurance coverage. Clinicians are frustrated about the limited tools at their disposal to help their patients heal. We need more options and tools in the toolkit. I personally know 6 people who have taken their own life over the past year. I can't help but wonder if their lives could have been saved if there were more effective options for them to access, especially when a viable alternative with psilocybin mushrooms is widely available, yet currently illegal to access.

Between this bill and HF2906-1, this pilot program has 4 co-authors that are members of this committee. We have compelling testimony from veterans, clinicians, and others who have experienced or endorse the benefits of psilocybin therapy. Both the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) and the [Department of Defense/War](#) are investing

millions into helping provide access to treat the mental health fallout of combat for veterans and active duty military, recognizing that those who serve our country have bared the cost with their mental health and deserve access to as many options that we can provide.

The task force report thoroughly reviewed the scientific research with psilocybin, and other psychedelic medicines, up to the end of 2024, with more promising research and therapeutic indications being published since then. The interest in psilocybin therapy has been increasing since their prohibition in 1970, not just from those hoping to experience their healing potential, but also from the scientific and medical communities that see this as an effective alternative to the currently available treatment options that aren't effective for large numbers of people. Current indications suggest [treatment resistant depression](#), [end-of-life distress](#), substance use disorders ([alcohol](#) and [tobacco](#)) are better treated with psilocybin, and promising findings from ongoing studies on dozens of other health conditions are coming out every day.

I encourage you to support HF4577 thank you for your time and consideration of this important piece of legislation to help ease the suffering veterans in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Jessica L. Nielson, PhD

Chair - [Psychedelic Medicine Task Force](#)

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