



February 10, 2017

Representative Dave Baker  
539 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Re: Letter of Support-HF770/SF563

Dear Representative Baker:

First of all, MARRCH would like to extend our sincere appreciation for your continuing efforts and contributions to improving addiction care in Minnesota. I am writing today in support of eliminating the "Buy and Bill" requirement for injectable forms of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), specifically for non-narcotic, non-addictive medications such as Vivitrol.

I and the MARRCH Board of Governors recognize the importance of modernizing Minnesota's addiction care system while removing barriers that prevent our citizens from receiving immediate access to quality care. One such barrier involves "Buy and Bill", an arrangement through which health care providers purchase pharmaceutical products directly from a wholesale or specialty distributor to have a supply of provider administered medication on hand for treatment of their patients. As you know, providers are generally not paid until their patients' covered insurance claims are reimbursed by the payer. Many small healthcare provider practices and clinics do not have the administrative staff or necessary overhead to manage this type of inventory control, billing systems and upfront costs.

As the former Director of the Ramsey County Detoxification Center, I have experienced firsthand how "buy and bill" requirements limited our ability to provide medications that would have benefited many of our clients, possibly saving lives. Vivitrol, in particular, could have been offered to many of our clients who were diagnosed with severe alcohol and/or opioid use disorders, but because we could not afford to purchase these medications in advance, our clients were deprived of that treatment option.

MARRCH supports efforts to eliminate the Medicaid "buy and bill" requirement for practitioner-administered MAT, thereby opening access to a non-narcotic, non-addictive MAT to Medicaid beneficiaries without requiring that the healthcare provider buy and bill the medication.

Respectfully,

Robert Rohret, MPH

Executive Director, MARRCH