



March 11, 2025

The Honorable Paul Novotny  
Chair, Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Kelly Moller  
DFL Lead, Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
5th Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Legal Aid/Minnesota Disability Law Center Letter in Opposition to HF 772**

Dear Chair Novotny, DFL Lead Moller, and Members of the Committee:

Legal Aid and the Minnesota Disability Law Center (MDLC) thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding HF 772. We write to express significant concerns with this bill.

This bill will discourage noncitizens with and without legal status from seeking mental health treatment due to fear of putting themselves and their families at risk of deportation. Unfounded or not, this bill will decrease public safety and increase the likelihood of mental health crises.

In addition, the bill lacks clear standards regarding its implementation. There are no details on who will determine whether it “appears that the person is an undocumented alien,” and how this determination is conducted. A patient who is not a native English speaker and is in the throes of a mental health crisis may be unable to fully explain their immigration status at the time of civil commitment. Consequently, state and county employees, who work as medical professionals and administrators and have no training in immigration law, will be forced to make judgments regarding a person’s immigration status. This process is likely to lead to erroneous reporting and the potential of bias against non-native English speakers and patients of color.

The purpose of civil commitment is to provide necessary treatment to individuals with mental illness who are a danger to themselves or others. Requiring medical institutions to become immigration enforcement officials will hamper the purpose of commitment and create a situation where those who may need treatment will avoid the judicial system at all costs. Random reporting based on suspicion will place patients in precarious situations where they are required to risk deportation in order to receive mental health care. People of color and non-native English speakers will likely be the ones hurt most by this haphazard process.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on HF 772. We urge this committee not to support this bill.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Purrington  
Legal Director/Deputy Director  
Minnesota Disability Law Center



Ellen Smart  
Staff Attorney  
Legal Services Advocacy Project

This document has been formatted for accessibility. Please call Ellen Smart at 612/746-3761 if you need this document in an alternative format.