

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

Center for Pediatric Obesity Medicine
Department of Pediatrics

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RE: HF894 / SF1263

Dear Health and Human Services Conference Committee Members,

Please accept this letter on behalf of the University of Minnesota Center for Pediatric Obesity Medicine in support of HF894 / SF1263, "Weight loss drugs and pharmaceutical ingredients medical assistance coverage authorization." Our Center is recognized as a world leader in the treatment of pediatric obesity and part of our mission is to drive educational and advocacy efforts on behalf of the millions of children who struggle with the disease of obesity.

Obesity affects nearly 1 out of every 3 people in the State of Minnesota. Obesity is a chronic, biologically-based disease that is primarily determined by genetics. Obesity is no one's fault. Obesity directly leads to other diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. It also negatively impacts productivity and employment. The annual per capita healthcare cost for obesity is estimated to be between \$2,741 to \$6,899 in the U.S.


Standard of care treatment for this disease includes anti-obesity medications. Currently, six medications are FDA-approved for the treatment of adult obesity and three medications are FDA-approved for the treatment of adolescent obesity. However, these medications are not covered by medical assistance. Therefore, people with obesity who have medical assistance cannot receive the standard of care to treat their disease. This is a major health equity issue. Furthermore, without medical assistance coverage of these medications, the long-term health consequences for individuals with obesity is significant and the healthcare expenditure faced by the State of Minnesota will be substantial.


The physicians, scientists, clinical care providers, and research staff of the Center for Pediatric Obesity Medicine **urge you to pass HF894 / SF1263** in the HHS omnibus bill, which would allow for all FDA approved anti-obesity medications (weight loss drugs and pharmaceutical ingredients) to be included in medical assistance coverage authorization. This will ensure that all patients with obesity have access to the treatment best suited to their clinical circumstance and allow medical providers to deliver equitable care for their patients.

If you have any questions or would like assistance on any issue involving the care of individuals with obesity, please contact: Center for Pediatric Obesity Medicine Phone: (612) 626-2349 Email: cpom@umn.edu.


Thank you for your time and consideration of this important legislative action,

The Center for Pediatric Obesity Medicine (CPOM) **Executive Committee**


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