

My name is Jessica Pacheco and I am a constituent in District 48A and a parent of a child with a disability.

I wanted to let everyone know how important it is to include the elimination of the TEFRA parental fee tax that many middle-class Minnesotans who have children with disabilities, including my own, have to pay in order to obtain secondary MA medical coverage for their child in the omnibus bill.

I live in Chaska. My son was diagnosed with autism at 18 months old. He is now almost 11. When he was diagnosed, the doctors encouraged us to get him into therapies/treatments as quickly as possible for best outcomes. When initially diagnosed the doctors classified him as the most severe level on the autism spectrum. However, through the therapies we started almost a decade ago, he is now in a mainstream classroom in 5th grade at Clover Ridge Elementary and doing so well with paraprofessional supports. He still has challenges, and still needs supports/therapies, but is doing wonderfully.

Many of the therapies he has received in the past decade were either partially or not covered at all by our primary employer-based primary health insurance. We have had to pay the TEFRA parental fee tax in order to have his life-changing therapies covered. This fee is hundreds of dollars a month on top of what we are already paying for primary insurance. (The fee calculator can be found here: <https://pfestimator.dhs.mn.gov/>) Minnesota didn't always require this fee, and the money that is collected from us doesn't even go back to MA, it goes into the Minnesota General Fund.

We need to bring an end to this harmful tax on families in MN with disabilities. It is a barrier and challenge to so many families. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Thanks,  
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