

May 1, 2023

Sen. Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Finance Committee
2107 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Tina Liebling
Chair, House Health Finance and Policy Committee
477 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Wiklund and Chair Liebling,

We write in support of expanding MinnesotaCare eligibility to undocumented noncitizens. As health care systems, we see firsthand the detrimental consequences a lack of health care coverage has on a patient's health and the compounding effect on their families and our communities.

Health insurance, or the lack of insurance, dictates where and when people get their health care, and ultimately, how healthy they are. It is not uncommon for patients without health care coverage to avoid preventative care, resulting in more severe conditions at an extremely high cost. Uninsured patients are more likely to require hospitalization for avoidable health problems compared to insured patients, and many patients may delay follow up care after an emergency, or not fill a necessary prescription due to out of pocket costs.

There is a gaping need for affordable and accessible health care coverage among undocumented Minnesotans. Access to coverage has multiple benefits including increased preventative care, resulting in earlier diagnosis of disease and reduction in costly emergency care for preventative illness. Low-income patients have greater financial security when they are able to prevent or treat illness and continue or return to the workforce following care.

Uninsurance results in inequitable and detrimental health outcomes due to delayed care as well as uncompensated care for health care systems. Health systems currently writing off uncompensated care can receive some reimbursement to cover the costs of providing services. We must put into place mechanisms to close coverage gaps in our health care system, otherwise we will see health disparities worsen.

MinnesotaCare eligibility to undocumented families will ensure more Minnesotans will access the health care they need to treat preventable or chronic medical conditions and live healthier lives.

Sincerely,

Avera Health
CentraCare
Gillette Children's
Children's Minnesota
Fairview Health Services
Hennepin Healthcare
North Memorial Health
Essentia
Minnesota Hospital Association