



WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH OF MINNESOTA

May 2, 2023

The Honorable Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2107
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Tina Liebling
Chair, House Committee on Health Finance and Policy
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
State Office Building, Room 447
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund, Chair Liebling, and members of the SF2995 conference committee,

On behalf of [Whole Woman's Health of Minnesota](http://www.wholewomanshealth.com), we urge you to support a 50% increase in the Medical Assistance reimbursement rate for abortion services in your Health budget.

Whole Woman's Health of Minnesota (WWH of MN) is a non-profit organization committed to providing holistic reproductive care for our patients, including abortion care, and to eradicate abortion stigma. Our clinic is a constituent located in District 51 and is a long-standing community presence providing vital reproductive health care services. We believe every person deserves the compassion, respect, and dignity of being able to safely and legally end a pregnancy. Our patients choose Whole Woman's Health because they know we will put them first and honor their decisions -- from the moment a patient walks into our doors to the moment they walk out.

As independent abortion providers and advocates, we were thrilled to support the passage of the Pro Act in January and we continue to work towards enacting the Reproductive Freedom Defense Act and the Reproductive Freedom Codification Act. Every day since the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, people have been denied abortion care, with the harm falling hardest on people of color working to make ends meet. Amidst our nation's ongoing abortion care crisis -- including a potential national ban on Mifepristone, an FDA-approved drug used in safe and effective medication abortion -- it's more important than ever that our leaders take bold action to protect and ensure access to abortion care. One way the legislature can make an impact is by raising the Medical Assistance reimbursement rate for abortion to ensure abortion providers can sustainably offer quality and affordable care to Minnesotans.

Medical Assistance is a critical program that ensures Minnesotans working to make ends meet have insurance coverage to lead healthy and productive lives and that no one is denied abortion coverage because of how much they earn. However, for the twelve years that Whole Woman's Health (WWH) has provided high quality, stigma-free abortion care at our clinic and via telemedicine, the Medical

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Assistance reimbursement rate has never increased. While a core part of our mission at WWH is to see any patient who needs our help, regardless of their ability to pay, the low and unchanged Medical Assistance rate means that we operate at a near 50% loss when serving our patients. Without fair reimbursement rates, trusted abortion providers in Minnesota are unable to sustainably operate and may be forced to close their doors. When we have fewer providers in our state, Minnesotans seeking abortion care will face longer wait times, have to drive longer distances, and see providers who are not in their community, creating insurmountable financial and logistical barriers. Fair reimbursement rates are an important part of ensuring abortion is affordable, available, and supported for every Minnesotan.

To ensure Minnesota is a beacon of reproductive freedom for Minnesotans and our friends from surrounding states, we respectfully urge you to increase the Medical Assistance rate for abortion care by 50% in your forthcoming budgets. Thank you for your time and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Karmann Peters, Minnesota Manager of Community Partnerships, at Karmann@shiftstigma.org.

Sincerely,

Whole Woman's Health of Minnesota

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