



March 12, 2024

The Honorable Mohamud Noor
Chair, Human Services Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
379 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Anne Neu Brindley
Republican Lead, Human Services Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
251 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF 3642 - Medical Assistance Eligibility and Transition Services for Incarcerated Individuals

Dear Chair Noor, Lead Neu Brindley, and Members of the Committee:

Legal Aid writes in strong support of HF3642. Legal Aid provides civil legal services statewide to low-income Minnesotans, Minnesotans with disabilities, and elder Minnesotans to help meet their basic needs.

Legal Aid attorneys and advocates represent individuals transitioning from incarceration to the community, including Legal Aid MNSure navigators who assist with health care. One example of our work comes from the St. Cloud office. Before the pandemic, jail personnel, county staff, local care providers, and a Legal Aid MNSure navigator worked to identify the needs of those scheduled for release from the county jail and help them with those issues. One of the outcomes was that Legal Aid's St. Cloud office completed healthcare applications on each person's release date. Our St. Cloud office continues to work with local probation officials to identify and serve those being released from incarceration. The office has also worked with the St. Cloud Correctional Facility to educate and enroll individuals in health insurance. In addition, Legal Aid participates in panels and staffs tables at correctional facilities during events for people about to be released.

This bill is an important step in ensuring that the transition process is seamless and will ensure continuity of care for individuals with chronic physical or behavioral health issues. This bill also provides a comprehensive list of care transition services that will assist individuals during a critical time. By providing a process and a 30-day timeline prior to release for starting transition services, this bill will help solve some of the challenges in helping these Minnesotans navigate the health insurance process.

Thank you for allowing Legal Aid to share its views. We urge passage of HF 3642.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellen Smart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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.