

HENNEPIN COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 30, 2023

Rep. Leigh Finke
Minnesota House of Representatives
423 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Sen. Erin Maye Quade
Minnesota Senate
Minnesota Senate Building Room 3227
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Finke and Sen. Maye Quade

Thank you for your steadfastness and compassion on behalf of all Minnesotans—it is essential that all people are able to receive care that sees their whole personhood and humanity. Hennepin County strongly supports your legislation (HF 146/SF 63) that would prohibit interference from other states in gender-affirming health care provided here in Minnesota. Hennepin County has the largest child welfare, child well-being, and local mental health programs in our state. Last year, the county established a policy to affirm the gender of anyone seeking government-funding health care, social services and supports, and our own county-based human resources programs and personnel.

As a political subdivision of the state that administers parts of the social safety net that you assign us, this legislation grants us a firmer basis to adhere to our gender-affirming policy. As more states seek to criminalize the provision of gender-affirming care to family members, we are increasingly at risk of being drawn into legal battles when children or vulnerable adults have parents or authorized guardians who live outside of Minnesota.

Our first duty is to the child and the vulnerable adult. Should counties be caught in the middle of a legal dispute over the provision of this fundamental right, medically necessary, and scientifically validated care, we would be compromised in our duty of care. Further, such disputes may be costly to taxpayers, while also distracting us from our core responsibilities.

Thank you for recognizing this problem and for introducing legislation to address it. We all know that the laws of other states should never stop a Minnesotan from providing the best, most appropriate care to a child or family member.

Thank you for your leadership,



Irene Fernando, Chair
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