



March 21, 2023

Dear Members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the more than 10,000 members of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), I am writing in support of two important items in HF2930, the Minnesota Department of Health budget bill.

The MMA supports continued funding for studies into telehealth expansion and payment parity, and continued coverage for telehealth service. Telehealth, specifically audio-only telehealth, is important for many Minnesotans. It is critical for patients who do not have access to reliable internet or broadband connectivity, low-income patients who may not have access to video-only technology, or patients who are less comfortable using video-only services. The MMA supports continuing audio-only coverage past the current June 30, 2023, deadline and the MDH study is important to achieve continued coverage.

The MMA also supports investments into rural residency training grants. Minnesota has a great need for additional physicians and other healthcare providers to practice in rural and other underserved regions of our state. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, an additional 14,100 to 17,600 physicians are needed across the country to address the shortage in rural areas. By locating training in rural areas, we can expose more future physicians to rural practice, and help address the workforce shortage of these professionals in Minnesota.

While there are many other items in HF 2930, I thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on these two critical provisions.

Sincerely,

William Nicholson, MD  
President, Minnesota Medical Association