**The MA Mental Health Access Coalition**

**Supports**

**H.F. 1011, Medical Assistance Mental Health Bill**

**Albright, Mack, Franson, Fischer, Schultz, McDonald, Lohmer, Gruenhagen, Backer, Zerwas, Schoen, Schomacker, Dean**

This legislation allows PAs to provide medication management and evaluation services for

MA patients in out- patient clinics after they have completed 2,000 hours of clinical

experience that includes mental health evaluation and treatment in out-patient settings.

PA’s are trained and licensed by the Board of Medical Practice to provide these services

today to *all* patients both in-patient and out-patient (commercially-insured, VA, Medicare,

federal employees, DOD). PAs currently provide medication management services to MA

patients only in in-patient settings, because state law denies payment for providing the same

service in out-patient settings. This prevents PAs from treating patients in out-patient

settings that the PA treated in-patient, creating continuity of care problems.

This policy of preventing patients from being treated by qualified providers has created

back-logs for MA patients needing follow-up visits after discharge from the hospital. These

backlogs can result in patients going months without a needed medication management

check to assure their dosage for medication is appropriate or to renew a prescription. These delays

in care create a two-tier system for the mentally-ill – immediate care if they are not on MA,

waiting months for care if they are on MA. Patients not on the correct dose may relapse and be

readmitted, which is the most expensive treatment. Our jails are overcrowded with MA patients

who are mentally ill and were not on the appropriate dosage.

This bill is supported by the providers that treat mentally ill MA patients, the State’s

Ombudsman for Mental Health (the leading consumer mental health advocate in Minnesota) and

was supported in 2014 by law enforcement associations that respond to mentally ill patients

that have not received their medication\*:

Allina Health

Avera Health

Essentia Health

Fairview Health Services

HealthEast

Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC)

North Memorial Health Care

PrairieCare Hospital and Clinics

Minnesota Academy of Physician Assistants

Minnesota Hospital Association

Minnesota Medical Association

Minnesota Psychiatric Society

Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

\*It was supported in 2014 by the Minnesota County Attorneys Association and the

Minnesota Sheriff’s Association Policy Committee, groups now reviewing the 2015

legislation.

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