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Tara Mack, Chair  
House of Representatives Health and Human Services Reform Committee  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Mack and Committee Members:

As a concerned citizen, a community organizer, a social researcher, a 3M Company R&D engineer, and a LAAMPP fellow, I am concerned about the structural barriers to progress in achieving equity, and improving the health of all communities. In spite of the overall good health of the State of Minnesota, we are all aware of the persistent disparities that exist between the average population and populations at risk.

Despite good faith efforts and resources invested in attempts to reduce disparities, there have been no significant reductions in health disparities and other indices of social wellness.

The barriers to success have been mostly structural. Addressing some of those structural barriers is the reason that I support HF 1208. Specifically, I would like to point out that some of the current metrics for provider quality, as applied within the SQRMS, do not measure performance accurately, and in fact, often impose and sustain penalties against populations with higher risk factors

Standardizing quality metrics does not mean that the same raw measurements should be applied to all populations. Scientific standardization requires that measurements arising from a set of data be normalized to account for peculiarities and variations within the samples and populations. For example, populations in St Paul's East side, or in North Minneapolis are more likely to have significantly higher health risk factors than say, populations in Wayzata or Mendota Heights. Therefore, in assessing outcomes after medical intervention, measurements for a given population should be primarily against that population's own baseline health profile.

Structural deficiencies in performance metrics lead to performance rankings that perpetuate disparities in health access and health outcomes. Using the appropriate measures will enable positive and greater returns on public investments in health, compared to what is currently at best zero returns.

I would earnestly request that you approve HF 1208, helping to remove structural and systemic barriers to positive improvements in health outcomes.

Thank you very much.

*Jonathan Rose*

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