

THE ALS ASSOCIATION  
MINNESOTA/NORTH DAKOTA/SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER  
info@alsmn.org  
www.alsmn.org

333 North Washington Avenue  
Suite 105  
Minneapolis  
MN 55401-1352

PHONE (612) 672-0484  
FAX (612) 672-9110  
TOLL FREE 1-888-672-0484

P.O. Box 2223  
Sioux Falls, SD  
57101-2223

PHONE (605) 274-0230  
FAX (605) 274-0231  
TOLL FREE 1-888-672-0484

March 6, 2017

Rep. Joe Schomacker  
509 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: HF 1561

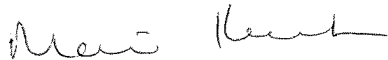
Dear Chair Schomacker and Members of the HHS Reform Committee:

We are writing to urge your support of HF 1561 a bill relating to health; allowing mental health practitioners to provide telemedicine services and eliminating the medical assistance limit on telemedicine encounters.

Current statute limits the frequency and type of providers who can use telemedicine to serve people experiencing health issues in rural settings. However, telemedicine has emerged as a viable, cost effective and appropriate vehicle for delivering a range of health services in the community. State policy and statutes need to be updated to support the expansion and accessibility of this care delivery model. More people will have access to quality care consistently when the range of providers and hours of care provided via telemedicine are expanded.

ALS often affects an individual's ability to move, walk and breathe and as such getting to doctor appointments can be difficult at best. In addition, people living with ALS need to see several specialists at any given time to address the multi-factorial aspects of this disease. If an individual were to be seen in a clinic setting he or she would access up to 15 different specialists to address each unique aspect of their illness. This multi-disciplinary type of care is the only care that has been proven to help people with ALS live longer and have a better quality of life. When a person is unable to leave their home due to the serious progression of this disease telemedicine visits can be their only means to receiving care. Having access to multiple disciplines needed to care for this disease is critical to ensuring people with ALS who receive telemedicine visits are receiving the best quality of care. This bill allows for an increase in the number of visits a person can access in a week; which is critical for people living with ALS. We strongly urge your support of this bill.

Regards,



Marianne Keuhn  
Vice President, Care Services  
ALS Association, MN Chapter

