



March 7, 2025

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the MN House Committee on Health Finance and Policy,

On behalf of the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, I am writing to express our strong support for House File 1379, legislation that would authorize the use of nonopioid directives in Minnesota. We commend Representative Dave Baker for his leadership in authoring this bill, as well as co-authors Representatives Bierman, Gillman, Virnig, and Backer, whose bipartisan collaboration highlights the urgency of addressing opioid use and its devastating effects.

As the nation's leading nonprofit provider of addiction treatment, Hazelden Betty Ford has been at the forefront of combating substance use disorders for over seven decades. With multiple locations across Minnesota, we have seen firsthand the impact of opioid addiction on individuals, families, and communities. Our expertise in evidence-based treatment and prevention strategies reinforces our belief that HF1379 is a critical step forward in empowering patients and reducing unnecessary exposure to opioids.

HF1379 establishes a formal mechanism for patients to refuse opioid medications through nonopioid directives. The Minnesota Department of Health would develop a standardized form that patients can complete and have entered into their medical records, indicating that they do not wish to be administered opioids unless medically necessary in a provider's best judgment. This bill is about patient autonomy—giving individuals control over their pain management choices without requiring them to repeatedly justify their decision, disclose personal recovery status, or navigate unnecessary explanations with each medical encounter.

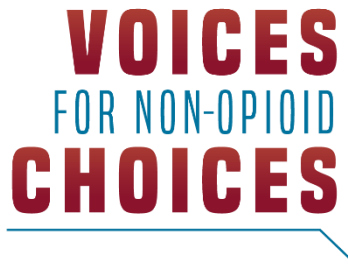
One of the most important effects of HF1379, if implemented effectively, will be its role in reducing the stigma and shame often associated with substance use disorder. By allowing individuals to make proactive healthcare decisions without having to repeatedly disclose their recovery status, this bill fosters dignity and autonomy in patient care.

We urge the committee to advance HF1379 and appreciate your dedication to addressing the opioid crisis in Minnesota. The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation stands ready to collaborate on efforts that promote safer pain management practices and enhance substance use prevention statewide.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to improving public health.

Sincerely,

Dr. Alta DeRoo  
Chief Medical Officer  
Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation



March 7, 2025

The Honorable Jeff Backer  
Chairman  
Committee on Health Finance and Policy  
Minnesota House of Representatives

The Honorable Dave Baker  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Backer, Representative Baker, and Members of the Minnesota House Health Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of Voices for Non-Opioid Choices (“Voices”), our Board of Directors, our 200-plus member organizations, and tens of thousands of advocates from around the country, I urge you to advance Minnesota HF1379.

The mission of Voices is to prevent opioid addiction where we can. For some, the path to addiction starts after being prescribed an opioid for medical reasons. Today, as many as 90 percent of acute pain patients continue to receive opioids to manage their pain. This results in millions of new cases of persistent opioid use every year in the United States.

In case you haven’t heard – the opioid crisis persists in Minnesota and across the country. In 2023, the last year for which we have full year data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we lost 222 Americans every day from an opioid-related drug overdose. In Minnesota, 80 percent of all drug overdose fatalities involve opioids.

For too long, our response to the opioid addiction crisis has focused on downstream attempts to prevent opioid-related overdose deaths. Such an approach misses an important opportunity to prevent addiction.

Voices – and our partners – believe that patients and providers deserve choices in how they manage pain. Too often, those decisions are made by payers and facilities more concerned with bottom lines than patient health. HF1379 addresses this challenge by ensuring that patients can avoid unnecessary exposure to prescription opioids.

In the process, the legislation can prevent addiction and save lives.

HF1379 represents a commonsense approach designed to minimize unnecessary exposure to narcotic pain medications and ensure that patients have choice in managing their pain. It’s an approach that Voices – and our partners – hopes we can all support.

I urge you to advance this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

/s

Chris Fox

Executive Director

Rep. Dave Baker  
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155



March 6, 2025

RE: Support for House Fill 1379 – Authorization of Nonopioid Directives

Dear Rep. Baker:

On behalf of the Coalition of Recovery Investment, a dedicated advocate for policies that expand access to evidence-based addiction treatment and recovery services, we write in strong support of HF1379. This critical legislation empowers individuals to take control of their health care by authorizing the use of nonopioid directives, ensuring that their preferences for pain management align with their recovery goals and personal health needs.

This bill represents a significant step forward in preventing opioid exposure, particularly for individuals in recovery, those with a history of substance use disorder (SUD), and patients who prefer nonopioid alternatives for pain management. By requiring health care providers to document and honor nonopioid directives, this legislation will protect individuals in recovery from accidental opioid exposure, reducing the risk of relapse and overdose. It will also support health care professionals in making informed decisions by integrating nonopioid directives into patient health records and will encourage the use of alternative pain management strategies, promoting safer, evidence-based solutions.

The opioid epidemic continues to devastate communities across our nation. Policies like this are essential in reducing unnecessary opioid prescribing and safeguarding individuals who are committed to maintaining their recovery.

Thank you for your continued leadership on substance use disorder issues. The Coalition of Recovery Investment stands ready to support this bill's advancement and to work collaboratively in promoting policies that foster recovery and prevent opioid-related harm. If CORI can be of help or if you have questions, please reach out to CORI's consultants, Sarah Erickson, at [sarah.erickson@unitedstrategiesllc.com](mailto:sarah.erickson@unitedstrategiesllc.com) or Tara Erickson at [tara@ericksonpublicaffairs.com](mailto:tara@ericksonpublicaffairs.com).

Sincerely,

Bill Messinger  
Chair  
Coalition of Recovery Investment