

Chair Bierman, Chair Backer and members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we have come together as the Healthcare Workforce Support Coalition to identify new policy opportunities that help address Minnesota's healthcare and social services industry workforce challenges. Our membership is comprised of a broad representation of healthcare providers, such as hospitals, dental providers and ambulatory surgical centers. Together, we are committed to identifying solutions that will support our workforce and serve our patients.

The Minnesota [2023 Job Vacancy Survey](#), prepared by the Department of Employment and Economic Development, identified *Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations* and *Healthcare Support Occupations* as the professional categories with the third and fourth (respectively) highest number of job vacancies. The two categories noted more than 26,000 vacancies in healthcare-related careers. Determining solutions is an ongoing process, and we, as a coalition, continue to challenge ourselves to identify more traditional policy opportunities, like streamlined licensure pathways and loan forgiveness, and creative alternatives, like exposure to healthcare learning opportunities at earlier ages, to address these outstanding job vacancies.

The primary themes and goals outlined by our coalition are three-fold:

- Ensure safety in our healthcare settings for staff and patients.
- Make it easier and more appealing to work in healthcare in Minnesota.
- Retain, reskill and upskill existing healthcare workers in Minnesota.

We encourage you to consider proposals that seek to achieve the above-mentioned goals and are happy to discuss the impact of such proposals.

Thank you for supporting those who dedicate their careers to providing quality care for Minnesota's patients. We hope you'll join us in identifying and securing solutions that help increase the number of Minnesotans entering the healthcare workforce and supporting growth throughout their careers.

Please support HF 1645.





April 4, 2025

Representative Jeff Backer
Co-Chair, Health Finance & Policy Committee
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Robert Bierman
Co-Chair, Health Finance & Policy Committee
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 5155

Dear Co-Chairs Backer and Bierman,

On behalf of the Minnesota Dental Association, a member of the "Treat Yourself First" provider coalition, I urge your support for HF1645.

A 2021 survey by the American Dental Association revealed that the percentage of dentists diagnosed with anxiety tripled compared to 2003. Many reported feeling less in control of their work environment, experiencing heightened stress, and scoring high on a depression scale. Burnout and stress-related conditions are increasingly affecting dental professionals, sometimes to the point of impairing their ability to practice safely and effectively.

Dentists often work in small or solo practices with limited access to peer support and mental health resources. The profession's physical demands—long hours in static positions, precision-driven work, and the emotional toll of treating anxious patients—exacerbate stress and fatigue. Without proper mental health support, these challenges can lead to burnout, early retirement, reduced patient access to care, and diminished quality of service.

Mentally and physically healthy dentists can provide compassionate, high-quality care for their patients.

Thank you for considering HF1645 and please support its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Murphy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dan Murphy, MPP
Director of Government Affairs
dmurphy@mndental.org
612-767-4255

About the Minnesota Dental Association

The Minnesota Dental Association is the voice of dentistry in Minnesota, representing practicing dentists. It is committed to the highest standards of oral health and access to care for all Minnesotans. Learn more at: www.mndental.org.

Minnesota Chapter

INCORPORATED IN MINNESOTA

American Academy of Pediatrics

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Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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April 4, 2025

Health Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota State Capitol
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard.
St Paul, MN 55155

Dear Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the over 1,000 members of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MNAAP), I am writing in strong support of HF 1645.

When seeing patients, pediatricians often discuss the importance of addressing and treating mental health. However, when it comes to members of our own profession, we often don't take our own advice. Pediatricians pour our hearts and souls into caring for children and their families, it is easy to neglect our own mental health and well-being. National data indicates that 60% of healthcare workers report symptoms of burnout. This can develop into severe mental health concerns including depression and anxiety, and suicidal ideation or attempts. Sadly, according to national survey data, more than 50% physicians know another physician who has considered, attempted, or died by suicide. This is a concerning fact that must be addressed by increasing awareness and reducing stigma around healthcare workers getting mental health treatment.

The stigma surrounding mental health treatment within our profession is pervasive. Many pediatricians feel reluctant to seek help due to fears of judgment or the potential impact on their careers. This silence only perpetuates a cycle of suffering and reduces capacity to provide compassionate care to patients. Reducing burnout and addressing stigma surrounding mental health treatment is not just beneficial; it is essential.

Thank you for taking the time to hear this important piece of legislation. I strongly urge your support for HF 1645.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Smentek".

Katie Smentek, MD, FAAP
President, Minnesota Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics



MINNESOTA ACADEMY OF PAS

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April 4, 2025

Rep. Liz Reyer
5th Floor, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar St.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Rep. Reyer,

On behalf of the Minnesota Academy of PAs (MAPA), I am writing to express our strong support for HF 1645, legislation that aims to provide essential grant funding to address healthcare worker burnout, reduce stigma, and encourage providers to seek mental health treatment when needed. MAPA represents Minnesota's 4,000+ PAs and PA students enrolled at Minnesota's five nationally accredited PA programs. As an organization dedicated to supporting PAs and the broader healthcare workforce, we recognize the urgency of this bill and its potential to positively impact the healthcare system in Minnesota.

Healthcare workers are the backbone of our communities, providing life-saving care under immense pressure. The past few years have only magnified the physical and emotional toll they endure daily. Burnout, stress, and mental health challenges have reached alarming levels, threatening the stability of our healthcare workforce and the quality of care patients receive. Reducing the stigma surrounding mental health treatment within the medical profession is vital. Many providers fear professional repercussions or societal judgment when seeking help, leading them to suffer in silence. By allocating funding to initiatives that promote provider mental well-being, this bill will help foster a culture where seeking mental health support is normalized and encouraged.

Supporting our healthcare workers means safeguarding the future of patient care in Minnesota. HF 1645 is a necessary and meaningful investment in both the individuals who dedicate their lives to caring for others and the broader healthcare system. We urge you to continue championing this legislation.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to the well-being of our healthcare workforce.

Sincerely,

Alannah Zheng, MSPA, PA-C, CLC
Co-Chair, Minnesota Academy of PAs Legislative & Reimbursement Committee