



Minnesota Hospital Association

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Submitted Electronically

March 13, 2023

Chair Liebling and members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA), we write in strong support of HF 2090 (Reyer) to increase funding by \$450,000 in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 for the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Summer Health Care Internship Program (SHCIP).

SHCIP gives students the opportunity to explore a career in a high demand field through a paid internship. Interns gain direct work and patient care experience with hospitals, clinics, nursing facilities, and home care providers. Employers benefit from more team support for the summer and the strengthening of their long-term workforce recruitment and development. Since 2014, 1,275 interns have participated in SHCIP with many continuing to pursue an education and career in health care. However, due to flat funding since 2014, SCHIP has not been able to support nearly 1,000 interns requesting participation.

Funding for SHCIP, and other health care workforce recruitment tools, needs to be increased. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) estimates that 1 in 4 job vacancies in Minnesota are in health care, amounting to 52,000 health care job vacancies. As the demand for health care services is expanding across Minnesota, critical shortages are occurring in many health professions, affecting multiple sectors in the health care industry throughout our state and this is simply not sustainable.

Solving the workforce shortage in health care is necessary and will uniquely require various approaches and investments, including SHCIP. Since the 1990s, SHCIP has sought to continue addressing health care workforce shortages by introducing secondary and postsecondary students to careers in health care in a non-classroom environment dedicated to their learning. SHCIP helps fund up to one-half the costs of employing summer health care interns. This is a valuable resource as health care organizations continue to suffer financially from increased labor costs and continuing impacts from COVID-19.

We urge you and this Committee to support HF 2090 (Reyer) and increase the ability of the MDH Summer Health Care Internship Program to foster interest amongst students in pursuing a health care career and expand the pipeline for Minnesota's desperately needed health care workforce.

Thank you for your consideration for our comments.

Sincerely,

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