



February 2, 2023

Members of the House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee,

Health insurance is an increasingly important benefit, allowing employers to attract and retain talent in the marketplace and ensuring Minnesotans and their families remain healthy. And yet rising health care costs are a major concern for all Minnesotans.

We share the goal of Rep. Stephenson to lower health care costs by curbing the cost of prescription drugs. However, we do not agree with the approach taken in HF 17. In particular, we are concerned with the fact that the bill would allow the newly established Prescription Drug Affordability Commission to unilaterally set the price for certain prescription drugs for all non-exempt public and private purchasers in the state.

The state government has long held an important role in regulating various aspects of the health care market. In recent years, the Legislature passed, and the Governor signed legislation to increase the state's oversight of Pharmacy Benefit Managers and the role they play in the prescription drug supply chain, as well as legislation to increase transparency around how pharmaceutical manufacturers price their drugs in the marketplace. But HF 17 would go beyond even these new state actions.

In handing an unelected, independent commission the authority to set prices for privately produced products that are sold in a competitive, private market, the state of Minnesota would be setting a very concerning precedent for government intervention that would very likely trigger any number of unintended consequences.

While Rep. Stephenson's work to make prescription drugs more affordable to the Minnesotans who need them is commendable, we have significant concerns about the specific approach encompassed in this bill. We look forward to continuing to work with him, the members of this Committee, and the Legislature to find ways to address the concerns associated with prescription drug costs. But we must do so without setting dangerous precedents for state intervention in the marketplace and inviting potentially harmful, unintended consequences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bentley Graves', is located below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Bentley Graves  
Director, Health Care & Transportation Policy  
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce