



The Kid Experts™

May 10, 2022
Health and Human Services Conference Committee

Dear Chair Abeler, Chair Liebling and Conference Committee Members,

On behalf of Children's Minnesota, I am writing to offer comments on several provisions in SF4410, the Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill. Children's Minnesota is the state's largest pediatric provider of health care, seeing over 135,000 patients last year alone. We see children and teens from all 87 counties and 60 percent of the counties in our surrounding states. We serve an incredibly diverse patient population and 46 percent of our patients are insured through Medicaid. Because of the diversity of patients we see, we know the unique and varied challenges Minnesota children face.

First, we want to thank both the House and Senate for including the bed moratorium exception for our inpatient mental health unit (House Art. 2, Sec. 9; Senate Art. 13, Sec. 7). As part of expanding our mental health care continuum, this fall Children's Minnesota is opening a new, inpatient mental health unit in our St. Paul hospital. In 2021, we had to transfer over 850 children to other facilities for inpatient mental health care. This new unit will ensure that kids with acute mental health needs and complex medical conditions will be able to receive high-quality, comprehensive care at Children's Minnesota.

SF4410 also includes several other important provisions that would benefit the patients and families we serve:

- Expanding children's inpatient psychiatric beds (House Art. 10, Sec. 68)
- Providing continuous MA eligibility for 12 months for children (House Art. 3, Sec. 18)
- Improving treatment of intractable pain (House Art. 6, Sec 56; Senate Art. 14, Sec 27)
- Prohibiting pharmacy benefit managers or health carriers from requiring white-bagging (House Art. 6, Sec. 45)
- Creating universal voluntary family home visiting services for every infant (House Art. 1, Sec 37);
- Investing in the mental health care provider workforce (House Art. 1, Sec. 13, 20-21, 90)
- Investing in nurse loan forgiveness programs (House Art. 1, Sec. 13, 15, 17)

At Children's Minnesota, our vision is to be every family's essential partner in raising healthier children. As the kid experts in our community, it is our goal to improve the health and wellbeing of kids in our state. We encourage you to prioritize these critical issues as you work towards a compromise Health and Human Services Omnibus bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Jansen".

Amanda Jansen, MPP
Director of Public Policy
Children's Minnesota