

House Human Services Finance Subcommittee

RE: Letter of Support for HF 1626

Dear Chair Mohamud Noor and Members of the House Human Services Finance Committee,

I am a parent of twin boys, both of whom have been waitlisted for services since their diagnosis at age 18 months. My boys are now three years old and we have never been able to utilize the EIDBI benefit, although they have a diagnosis and referral from Children's developmental pediatrics. We are constituents of district 34B.

We have been waiting the majority of my children's lives for services. This is not to say that we received inadequate services or delayed services – we literally cannot access ANY EIDBI therapeutic services. When we do find a provider who offers EIDBI services, they will not accept our children due to a full waitlist OR because my children are on Medicaid.

Since my boys just turned three years old, they were evaluated by the school district and are eligible for special education preschool two days a week for two hours. EIDBI and ABA Therapy is suggested for 40 hours a week and my kids will get, instead, four hours a week and it will not be the recommended therapy.

While waiting for services, one of my children has begun to self-harm. He gets overwhelmed and frustrated and hits his head and pulls his hair. I do not have the expertise, education or experience to help him. There is no resource for waitlisted parents that deals with immediate needs such as newly developed harmful behaviors. Of course, we have seen his pediatrician and we were given a list of agencies to call and check for availability. None of the providers on the list have availability and more than half of the providers would not accept my son because of the newly acquired self-harming behavior.

My partner and I work full-time. We volunteer. We hold leadership positions in our community. We have family nearby. We are considering moving states because the supports for our kids have been so horrible.

The VERY LEAST we can do – YOU can do – is support HF 1626/SF 1593. As a parent, I am begging you to consider supporting this measure to increase the access and availability of therapy for our children.

Sincerely,



Sarah Driever
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