

4/22/2025

Robert and Jennifer Schaust

Corcoran, MN

To Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

I write to oppose parental fees for TEFRA and waivers for children with disabilities.

I write as someone who normally wouldn't practically qualify for MA-TEFRA assistance, as my family's AGI exceeds the threshold for it to be economically viable, as the MA-TEFRA with parental fees would cost more than our private health insurance. However, if you've ever sought care for a child with Autism, what you quickly find is that many clinics and therapy centers do not accept private insurance, as they do not reimburse at a uniform or substantial percentage, and the administrative burden to the centers costs them far more to process those payments than MA-TEFRA.

Therefore, without MA-TEFRA, our 6 year old son would not be able to practically get care and therapy. While options exist, they would be limited to the point that the 6 month-to-2-year waiting lists that already exist, would stretch far beyond that, meaning that unless we can afford to pay both our private insurance AND the MA-TEFRA parental fee, he would wait even longer.

As an example, though we do well as a family, that would put our monthly healthcare costs well over \$6K per month. Even on a strong salary, that is nearly impossible for us, and most families in Minnesota.

This is a slippery slope, that also makes fee increases easier for lower income groups as well. I request that you reconsider the real-life impact this will have on real Minnesota families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Schaust', with a stylized, cursive script.

Robert Schaust

Autism Parent, and Member of the Board, Spero Academy