

Dear Chair Noor and House Human Services Finance Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on HF1434, to eliminate TEFRA fees.

I am the mother of three beautiful children. My son, Parker, is 11 and is my youngest child. He was born with multiple disabilities that are severe and affect every aspect of his life, and those of the rest of our family. In order to help bridge the gap between what our private insurance covers, and what Parker needs, we applied for MA for him, as a disabled person. He easily qualified based on his diagnoses, however, as a one income family, we still make too much for Parker to qualify due to the income restrictions. Thankfully, we learned that we could be assessed a TEFRA parental fee in order to access the MA waiver benefits that increase Parkers quality of life, and help him remain at home with those who love him.

We quickly learned that our TEFRA fees in order to provide Parkers services and help him meet his potential were difficult for us to afford. What parent wants to be put in the position that services that your child needs are available, but at a cost that is difficult for us? In simple terms, we resorted to paying our fees through credit cards and have had our income tax returns reclaimed by the State of MN. We have had to tell our other two children that we are unable to afford experiences they have wanted to participate in. We have budgeted on our every day expenses. We have made difficult decisions that have meant the rest of the family has had to make concessions in order for one to access services he needs. My husband has worked excessive overtime to help pay our fees, only resulting in our fees then being raised the following year because his income increased due to the overtime. It's a vicious cycle that you cannot win.

I ask you to pass HF1434, to eliminate TEFRA parental fees, to help level the playing field for our family and the other thousands of families in our state who are in similar circumstances.

Sincerely,

Heather Kainz