

Minnesota Senate

Minnesota Senate Building
95 West University Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155



Minnesota House

Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar St.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Dr. Herman and Members of the Essentia Health Negotiating Team,

As members of the Duluth Legislative Delegation, we write to express our deep disappointment in the way Essentia Health has approached negotiations with its clinic nurses and Advanced Practice Providers (APPs). We urge Essentia to honor the will of its workers, respect their rights, and come to the bargaining table in good faith to put an end to the ongoing strike and ensure providers can return to caring for their patients.

It is troubling that Essentia Health has chosen to engage in anti-union tactics, slow-rolling negotiations with clinic nurses and outright refusing to negotiate with APPs despite a clear directive from the regional National Labor Relations Board to do so. This approach not only disrespects the dedicated healthcare professionals who serve our communities but also undermines the trust and well-being of the patients who rely on Essentia's care.

The willingness to spend significant resources on replacement workers rather than invest in fair and equitable contracts for your own staff is deeply concerning—particularly given the uncertainty surrounding future federal funding for healthcare. This decision fails not only your employees but the entire region that depends on Essentia for high-quality care.

We are reminded of your testimony before the Senate Health Committee in February, where you referred to labor partners as “colleagues.” Unfortunately, the current actions by Essentia's leadership suggest otherwise, treating these valued professionals not as partners but as adversaries.

Now is the time for Essentia Health to live up to its stated values, support its workforce, and restore confidence among employees, patients, and the community. We strongly urge you to return to the bargaining table immediately, negotiate in good faith, and reach an agreement that recognizes and respects the vital contributions of these healthcare workers.

Our communities deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liish Kozlowski".

Liish Kozlowski
State Representative
District 8B
651.297.8146

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pete Johnson".

Pete Johnson
State Representative
District 8A
651.296.4246

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer A. McEwen".

Jennifer McEwen
State Senator
Senate District 8
651.296.4188