



451 Lexington Pkwy N
St. Paul, MN 55104

Phone 651-280-2000
Fax 651-280-3000

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Health and Human Services Committee
MN State Senate
April 9, 2026

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members,

On behalf of Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, I am sending this letter of strong support for -
Health Care Provider Reimbursement for Uncompensated Care.

The Wilder Foundation is the oldest not-for-profit organization in St. Paul. We have been providing mental health services for children and families in the East Metro since 1924, continually evolving to meet each generation of needs in the community for over a hundred years.

In 2017, we were honored to become one of the first six Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) in Minnesota. Even in the context of more than 100 years of change and growth, becoming a CCBHC stands out as the single greatest improvement in our ability to meet the needs of children, adults, and families.

As an essential safety net community provider, Wilder serves clients and communities who would not otherwise have access to mental and chemical health care. Of the more than 3,000 families we serve, over 75% are Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color and about 40% of the people we serve speak a primary language other than English. We also have one of the few Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health programs for little children and their families in the city that offers early intervention to radically improve outcomes.

People of all ages living with mental health and substance use disorders benefit from high quality and integrated community-based treatment to support their daily lives, relationships with family, friendships, housing and employment. We are honored to serve multiple truly unique populations within our community, and we have been able to build a better continuum of care for them through the CCBHC model.

Minnesota's CCBHCs are part of a new model of delivering integrated behavioral health care to Minnesotans. Originally built under a federal demonstration, the state legislature passed legislation to transition this transformational model into a covered benefit under Medical Assistance.



451 Lexington Pkwy N
St. Paul, MN 55104

Phone 651-280-2000
Fax 651-280-3000

With the anticipated implementation of HR 1 provisions, our clinic's uncompensated care will increase drastically as individuals we serve are denied or disenrolled from Medicaid coverage.

Minnesota's safety net community health care and mental health care system are fragile and facing a crisis. The progress and intentional investments you and the rest of the Legislature made in the last decade will be eroded with these new changes from Congress and the federal government. The Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) model was designed to provide access to critical outpatient and community-based care when the state closed its mental institutions and hospitals. Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) were developed to bring a new model of comprehensive mental health care to sustain community-based access across our nation. Both these mental health models are mandated to serve all who come to them and not deny care, regardless of someone's insurance status, where they live or their ability to pay for care.

Both models have strong bipartisan support in the state, Congress and Federal Administrations. Yet, their core funding mechanisms and services will fall under Medicaid changes in HR 1. The individuals, families and communities we serve will not go away with these changes. But, their access to the care they need to contribute to our society will vanish if we do not take steps to address the impact to our state's system.

This bill offers a bridge and support to assist with the increased uncompensated care our safety net mental health centers – community health centers, hospitals and emergency medical services – face with HR 1 implementation and help to manage immediate disruption. This will help support our providers to remain financially viable to keep care access available.

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation is urging you to support this bill and the foundation of our behavioral health system in Minnesota.

Thank you for your leadership and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pahoua K. Yang'.

Pahoua K. Yang, MSSW, PhD, LICSW, LP

Vice President, Community Mental Health and Wellness