

April 14, 2026

Health and Human Services Committee
Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: SF 4612 DE

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members,

On behalf of NAMI Minnesota, I write to thank this committee for your continued leadership and thoughtful work to improve access to mental health care for Minnesotans across the state.

Mental health needs among Minnesotans remain significant. Approximately one in five Minnesotans experience a mental illness, and about one in 20 live with a serious mental illness. In addition, roughly one in five adults report their mental health was not good for at least two weeks in the past month, underscoring the widespread need for early support and intervention. These realities highlight the importance of the committee's ongoing investments in prevention, early intervention, and school-based supports.

We appreciate several positive provisions in the bill. In particular, we support the provider credentialing language in Article 9, Section 1, which will help reduce administrative barriers and improve timely access to mental health care. We also appreciate that the bill does not include proposed changes related to HR 1 to increase cost-sharing and reduce retroactive coverage, which could create additional barriers for individuals seeking care.

At the same time, we respectfully encourage the committee to continue strengthening the bill in several key areas.

First, the absence of the proposal to create a **First Episode Psychosis (FEP) Medicaid benefit** is a missed opportunity. Early intervention is critical to improving long-term outcomes for young people experiencing psychosis, and investment in FEP programs has a strong evidence base.

Second, the bill does not currently include funding for the next phase of **Mental Health Uniform Service Standards (USS)**, which is a critical reform to support continued access to and expansion of mental health services in Minnesota - balancing program integrity issues with consistency in the experience for people accessing services.

Third, we encourage the committee to adopt the Governor's recommendation to expand coverage of **Targeted Case Management (TCM) for individuals who are incarcerated**.

Strengthening continuity of care during incarceration and upon reentry is key to improving outcomes and reducing recidivism.

Finally, we encourage additional investments in **school-linked behavioral health** and **mobile crisis services**. These services are critical for early intervention, reducing reliance on emergency departments, and ensuring individuals receive support in the least restrictive settings.

We recognize the complexity of your work and are grateful for the committee's commitment to improving Minnesota's mental health resources. NAMI Minnesota stands ready to partner with you to continue strengthening this legislation to better meet the needs of all Minnesotans.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to expanding access to mental health care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Schmit", is positioned above the typed name.

Marcus Schmit
Executive Director