



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

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members

On behalf of Spero, I am sending this letter of strong support for - **Health Care Provider Reimbursement for Uncompensated Care.**

Spero is a CCBHC clinic in south Minnesota, serving three counties and over 3700 unique clients, with over 37,000 services annually. We serve all clients who walk through our door, regardless of their ability to pay, which is a statute requirement. This results now in approximately \$600,000 in uncompensated care.

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.

Spero is urging you to support this bill and the foundation of our behavioral health system in Minnesota.

Thank you for your leadership and support.

Michele Merxbauer, CEO
Spero

speromn.org 610 Florence Avenue
507.451.2630 Owatonna, MN 55060