



Minnesota Alliance of Rural Addiction Treatment Programs

April 7, 2026

Sen. John Hoffman, Chair
Senate Human Services Finance Committee
Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hoffman and committee members:

The Minnesota Alliance of Rural Addiction Treatment Programs (MARATP) is a non-profit organization that seeks to bring together diverse rural interests to address and advocate for strong substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs throughout Greater Minnesota. We are writing to express our strong support for S.F. 4710 (Abeler).

Rural SUD treatment providers remain financially vulnerable due to persistently thin operating margins, increased client acuity, and rising costs of care that outpace reimbursement. Our member programs continue to face significant headwinds in workforce recruitment and retention. Licensed alcohol and drug counselors, peer recovery specialists, nurses, and mental health clinicians are in short supply in rural communities. Providers cannot compete with urban wage scales or traveling positions without targeted and reliable funding support. These pressures jeopardize the stability of the rural SUD continuum and, in turn, the timely access to lifesaving services for Minnesotans outside metropolitan areas.

S.F. 4710 takes meaningful steps to address these issues. First, the proposal makes meaningful investments in adolescent treatment programs that recognizes the complexity of serving that population while also realizing the value to the system of improving outcomes for younger Minnesotans. Second, the proposal would create a new process for ensuring that providers are reimbursed for providing essential withdrawal management services. As the state has transitioned from detoxification (for which counties were financially responsible) to withdrawal management (which is a Medical Assistance benefit), many counties have backed away from paying for residents in need of these essential services. S.F. 4710 would help address the growing reimbursement issues for those services.

Lastly, S.F. 4710 also extends individual eligibility under the Behavioral Health Fund from 60-days to 180-days in a calendar year. This will ensure access to services for thousands of Minnesotans, including many individuals who might struggle to navigate the Medicaid eligibility changes that will be imposed on January 1, 2027 because of H.R. 1. Extended Behavioral Health Fund eligibility is essential to avoiding a near catastrophic increase in uncompensated care.

As such, MARATP strongly supports S.F. 4710 and appreciates the committee's attention to these important proposals. Thank you in advance for your consideration and your support of the recovery community.

Sincerely,
Marti Paulson, President
Minnesota Alliance of Rural Addiction Treatment Programs