



Minnesota Hospital Association

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February 6, 2019

Representative Liz Olson
221 State Office Building
Rep.liz.olson@house.mn

Senator Julie Rosen
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2113
Sen.Julie.rosen@senate.mn

Subject: Support for the opioid stewardship bills

Dear Rep. Olson and Sen. Rosen:

Thank you for your leadership in helping Minnesota address the opioid epidemic in Minnesota. I write to you today on behalf of the 141 hospitals and health systems of the Minnesota Hospital Association. Like we did during the 2018 legislative session, we enthusiastically join you in support of the Opioid Stewardship legislation.

Minnesota's hospitals and health systems have seen mental health and substance abuse emergency room visits increase substantially over the past nine years. While Minnesota has received some federal funding for an opioid response, a sustained and coordinated investment and strategy from the State is necessary.

The bipartisan Opioid Stewardship legislation would rightfully recoup a small fraction of pharmaceutical companies' profits from the sale of opioids to defray the cost of the opioid epidemic on Minnesota's health care system and county social services. This funding is needed to support prevention efforts, treatment and recovery services, expand the use of Medication Assisted Treatment, provide improved prescriber education, implementation of the Department of Human Services' opioid prescribing guidelines and assistance to social services for caring for children and families affected by opioid addiction.

We also urge the State to use funding generated to improve the state's Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) so it can better integrate with health care providers' electronic health record systems. The more accessible PMP data are when providers and patients are making care decisions, the better and safer those decisions will be. In addition, we support the provision to increase payment rates for substance use disorder services.

Opponents will claim these fees on manufacturers and distributors will increase health care costs. The truth is, opioid addiction will continue to drive up our health care costs. From 2010 to 2017, substance abuse emergency department visits increased 146 percent. A recent analysis of a White House Council of Economic Advisors' report showed that opioid addiction cost Minnesota nearly \$5.5 billion in 2016. These grants provided for in the legislation will make it possible to increase capacity and accessibility of addiction treatment services by spreading successful models of care throughout our state, including via the Project ECHO program led by our members from Hennepin Healthcare and CHI St. Gabriel's Health.

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Page 2

We stand ready to assist you in helping to pass this legislation. Please contact Mary Krinkie, MHA vice president of government relations, at mkrinkie@mnhospitals.org with any opportunities for us to partner with you throughout the session in passing what could be very significant legislation for Minnesotans.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence J. Massa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lawrence" and last name "Massa" clearly distinguishable.

Lawrence J. Massa, M.S., FACHE
President & CEO