

Dear Representative/Senator _____:

I am asking for your support in two important issues that will impact Minnesota's most vulnerable pediatric patients this session. If these bills are not passed, my family (and many others) will be ripped apart because our children will be forced back into the hospital, which in the end will cost tens of thousands of dollars more than keeping them at home. I urge you to please consider what keeping medically complex children at home with their families means to Minnesota financially and emotionally.

1. H.F. 1053 and S.F. 988

The first issue is keeping Minnesota Medicaid from adopting the Federal Medicare “Competitive Bidding” program for home care Durable Medical Equipment (DME) in order to protect patient access to critical medical equipment and supplies.

If the Federal “Competitive Bidding” Program is applied to MN Medicaid, children with medical complexities will be forced out of their homes and back in the hospital to receive the equipment and supplies they need as their current DME suppliers will no longer be able to sustain business and supply the products at the more than 45% reimbursement cuts that Competitive Bidding would bring. The costs to the state would skyrocket when patients are admitted to the hospital versus being cared for at home by their families.

2. H.F 1122 and S.F. 628

The second issue is for a long needed new third reimbursement tier for home care nursing.

There are currently patients sitting in NICUs across the state who are ready and waiting to be discharged to home, but cannot go home due to lack of nurses. The skills needed to care for patients who meet the third tier requirement are just as high, if not higher than, the skills needed to work in the hospitals. The nurses in the home have to be ready and able to care for any type of emergency alone that would come up as they don't have a call button or a team across the hall to help when needed.

Creating the third tier would allow providers to pay nurses at a rate that is equitable to the hospitals, increasing retention, increasing speedy discharges for these patients to go home to their families and increasing savings to the state. On average, home care costs \$1,000/day for a complex patient, whereas hospital care can cost \$5,800/day.

Please allow families like ours to stay together, at home by keeping “competitive bidding” out of Medicaid and paying our highly skilled and qualified nurses for what they do, not where they do it.

Sincerely,