



OFFICE OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY ATTORNEY

John J. Choi

May 4, 2022

The Honorable Senator Rich Draheim
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3227
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Exception for Increased Mental Health Bed Capacity, Senate File 3249

Dear Senator Draheim,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed exception to Minnesota's hospital bed moratorium, contained in Senate File 3249, that would specifically allow our health systems to establish more inpatient mental health opportunities.

Our office encounters those with mental illness daily in our community. Our civil commitment attorneys, working with law enforcement and correctional officers, struggle to meet the safety and legal needs of those in crisis. Having a local and stable mental health care facility partnership is critical to our success in managing these challenging and dynamic needs.

There is an urgent, unmet need for additional inpatient mental health beds that requires immediate action. Today, there are simply not enough mental health beds to meet the needs of our community.

We fully understand that there are barriers to the establishment and operation of mental health beds. We are asking the legislature, governor, and the Minnesota Department of Health to remove one of those barriers, even for a limited amount of time. Granting this exception to the moratorium would allow a health system – or others – to propose and invest in creative solutions to the deficit of needed inpatient mental health care options.

Please help our communities to address the growing crisis in mental health care. Please support the limited exception to the hospital bed moratorium for inpatient mental health beds. I would welcome an opportunity to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

John Choi
Ramsey County Attorney

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