June 15, 2020
Sent Electronically

Representative Tine Liebling, Chair
House Health and Human Services Finance Committee
477 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Liebling and Members of the Health and Human Services Finance Committee:

The Minnesota Association of Community Health Centers (MNACHC) strongly supports the extension of COVID-19 waivers granted to the Minnesota Department of Human Services. An extension of the waivers will sustain the flexibility needed to meet patient and community needs as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to make in-person care dangerous.

MNACHC represents Minnesota's seventeen Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) that collectively serve the primary medical, dental, and behavioral health care needs of 190,000 low in-come and disproportionately diverse Minnesotans across the state. The COVID-19 human services waivers granted to DHS are critical for operations at FQHCs to sustain levels of comprehensive care needed to address COVID-19 and to safely provide services for all routine health care needs.

MNACHC specifically urges support for the extension of CV16: expanding access to telemedicine services for Children's Health Insurance Program, MA, and MinnesotaCare enrollees, by allowing the expanded use of telephone calls, and allowing more than three telemedicine visits a week. This waiver has been the cornerstone of all primary health care services at FQHCs during COVID-19 and its extension will continue to provide FQHCs with the flexibility for telemedicine to keep their patients, providers, and staff safe.

MNACHC supports the extension of all waivers to support the unprecedented challenges that all types of providers and patients face during COVID-19. An extension of all waivers will provide operational continuity of new service delivery models that are needed to keep Minnesotans safe and to fight COVID-19.

Thank you for your consideration and have a wonderful day!

Danny Ackert
Director of Public Policy
Minnesota Association of Community Health Centers