



Re: House File 1646

Dear Chair Her, Chair O’Driscoll, and committee members:

Last session the legislature passed the Minnesota Debt Fairness Act, providing Minnesotans who are repaying debt, including medical debt, with more protections. Some of these reforms include banning the automatic transfer of medical debt to one’s spouse, banning reporting medical debt to credit bureaus, and banning denying necessary medical care on the basis of unpaid bills.

These important steps laid the groundwork for further action, and HF 1646, otherwise known as the Minnesota Medical Debt Reset Act, represents the next phase of that crucial work. It will assist struggling Minnesotans who didn’t choose to get sick and who didn’t ask for the debt that came along with that. It will support our hospitals by helping them fulfill their commitment to community wellbeing, while also getting uncollectable debt off their balance sheets. And at a time when the state is experiencing a tight budget, we can remain focused on helping our neighbors, ensuring that financial strain doesn’t prevent people from accessing care and maintaining their health and wellbeing.

This approach offered in the bill is not new; 25 local and state governments across the country, including the states of Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, and Rhode Island, have partnered with Undue Medical Debt, dedicating public funds to relieve the burden of medical debt for their residents. In fact, Minnesota’s own City of Saint Paul has erased nearly \$40 million in medical debt for its residents. Given this success, it’s clear that more Minnesotans who are struggling under the unnecessary burden of medical debt should receive a much-needed reset.

The undersigned organizations support HF 1646 and respectfully ask the legislature to pass the bill.



Sincerely,

- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- American Diabetes Association
- Cancer Legal Care
- COPAL
- Exodus Lending
- Healthcare for All Minnesota
- ISAIAH
- Jewish Community Action
- The ALS Association
- The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid & Legal Services Advocacy Project
- Minnesota AFL-CIO
- Minnesota Farmers Union
- Minnesota Rare Disease Advisory Council
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- SEIU Healthcare MN & IA
- Unidos MN