PrairieCare
A Division of Newport Healthcare

March 16, 2026

1100 Minnesota State Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for SF4388 – Strengthening Access to Children's Mental Health

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing on behalf of PrairieCare to express our strong support for SF4388, a critical piece of legislation designed to enhance access to mental health services for children and families in Minnesota. This bill addresses the ongoing crisis stemming from a lack of access to necessary care, which has led to children boarding in hospitals and detention facilities. By implementing targeted measures, SF4388 aims to ensure that children and their families have access to the mental health support they need to thrive.

As one of the nation's largest providers of mental health care for youth and families, we are seeing increasingly complex psychiatric conditions often exacerbated by delays in accessing care. We can often identify points in their journey where earlier intervention would have mitigated severity of their illness. These cases are commonly marked by traumatic experiences, a lack of social support, and coping through maladaptive externalizing behaviors that make healing more challenging. Simply put, it should not have gotten to this point of crisis – we had missed opportunities to intervene and help sooner.

One of the significant goals of SF4388 is the codification of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation grant. This initiative will support early identification of mental health issues and promote skill development, ensuring sustained access to quality care for our youngest and most vulnerable populations. This bill will help eliminate barriers for highly acute children, by establishing a prudent parenting standard to support children living in group homes, allowing them to receive appropriate care in a timely manner. This change is essential for fostering a nurturing environment where children can heal and grow.

SF4388 represents a vital legislative effort to improve access to mental health care for Minnesota's children. By prioritizing early intervention, supporting community-based solutions, and fostering collaboration among providers, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our youth. We strongly encourage the committee to support this important bill. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Todd Archbold, LSW, MBA
PrairieCare CEO