



# Protecting Healthcare Access and Affordability

## The Problem: Increased Corporatization of Healthcare

- Hospital CEOs continue to close hospitals, pay millions to themselves and other top executives, and deny nurses and patients the resources needed to ensure safe staffing and quality patient care at the bedside.
- Not only do patients and communities suffer when they lack access to quality and affordable care, but hospital executives' focus on profits rather than patients also exacerbates high nurse turnover rates.
- Hospital executives have repeatedly made clear their priorities are firmly focused on their own bottom lines and corporate expansion that has resulted consolidated control over healthcare markets that worsens the accessibility and affordability of quality patient care.
- While these are national problems and trends, rural Minnesota stands out as one of the most concentrated, least competitive healthcare markets in the nation.
- Corporate mergers and healthcare monopolies threaten to increase costs and lower the quality of care for patients, while mergers are often followed by important services being eliminated and the closure of hospitals and clinics.

## Mergers and Monopolies: Consequences of Corporatized Healthcare

- Hospital mergers reduce competition and allow hospital executives to increase patient costs.
- Reduced competition has also been shown to produce a lower quality of patient care.
- Hospital mergers threaten to increase worker "burnout" at a time when corporate healthcare policies are already pushing more nurses out of the profession.
- Mergers allow hospital executives to consolidate units and close hospitals, cutting off vital access to care in rural and urban communities.

## H.F. 402 will help stop corporate hospital mergers that would harm Minnesotans

- Establishes Essential Public Oversight – Creates a new public process to review proposed mergers and approve or deny them based on how access and affordability of healthcare services would be impacted for Minnesotans. This review would include potential impacts on health disparities for specific communities and on other hospitals and clinics in the area.
- Protect Public Health Assets – Minnesota hospitals operate as nonprofit organizations, and receive considerable federal, state, and local tax breaks, donations and other public support. This bill would protect the investments the public has made in our healthcare system, to ensure these assets cannot be coopted by an out-of-state, corporate healthcare system.
- Community Control – Minnesota nurses believe hospitals should be rooted in, and should serve, our communities. This bill helps ensure that decisions about care and healthcare services are determined locally, not by out-of-state healthcare corporations or profit-driven conglomerates disconnected from the communities they serve. The bill would ensure a public review process that gives Minnesotans a voice in what happens to healthcare in their communities, so our hospitals are not treated solely as business assets by healthcare corporations.