



March 20th, 2023

Professional Distinction

Rep. Esther Agbaje
437 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Personal Dignity

Patient Advocacy

Assistant Majority Leader Agbaje,

With 22,000 members, the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) is the leading voice for professional nursing in the State of Minnesota. As leaders in labor and health care, we are a voice for frontline hospital nurses around the state who strongly support evidence-based health policy that enables patients to access healthcare, including reproductive health care, and ensuring that healthcare providers are protected when providing these vital healthcare services. We thank you for your important work on leading HF 91 The Reproductive Freedom Defense Act.

We know that most Minnesotans support access to full reproductive healthcare options and for individuals to have autonomy over medical decisions affecting them. MNA's own stance reflects support of this position as well. Unfortunately, there are many laws in place that prevent full access to healthcare and the overturning of Roe v. Wade led to a flood of cruel and harmful laws attacking not only abortion rights, but also individual liberties and privacy more broadly. Patients should not have to face repercussions for accessing abortion care nor should providers fear providing that healthcare. It is deeply troubling to see the impact of these harmful policies spreading into Minnesota and MNA commends this work to ensure Minnesota is a safe place for all people to access and provide quality healthcare.

Nurses see the results of these policies regularly in their own profession. Barriers often result in more serious healthcare issues which burden our already understaffed emergency departments and hospitals. As Minnesota begins to see an increase in patients coming from bordering states to receive reproductive care, it will even further exacerbate this issue.

Now is the time for Minnesota to remove these harmful policies and ensure that we continue to be a leader in providing equitable healthcare, access, and support for those in need. For the health, safety, and economic well-being of patients and nurses across the state, we need to pass HF 366 the Reproductive Freedom Defense Act.

Sincerely,

Shannon M. Cunningham
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