

HEALTH CARE SAFE ZONES LEGISLATION – SF 2052/HF 2749 HELP MINNESOTA RECRUIT AND RETAIN CARE STAFF BY KEEPING THEM SAFE

Violence, bullying, harassment and other aggressions affect many professionals in the health care industry throughout their careers. The [World Health Organization](#) estimates that as many as 38% of those in the health care field suffer physical violence at some point in their careers and many more are threatened with verbal aggression. According to the [American Medical Association](#), violence in the health care workplace has been on the rise for the past decade and worsened throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Violence is perpetrated by patients and visitors with the most at-risk health care workers including nurses, emergency room staff, paramedics, and other staff directly and in-directly involved with patient care. With health care being the fastest-growing sector of the financial system, employing over 18 million workers, according to the [CDC](#), these acts of violence can and must be mitigated to protect and support this industry.

While there may be numerous ways to address this concerning trend, the organizations presented here are seeking funding to help offset some of the costs accrued to enact safety measures. Such improvements could be through infrastructure updates, implementation of new software to track safety incidences, and increased education and training opportunities such as those typically associated with health care-based violence intervention programs. The goal of this request is to allow organizations to invest in safety measures and protocols that take steps to increase safety for not only staff but also those they serve.

HF 2749/SF 2052 requests \$20 million in funding from the Health Care Access Fund (HCAF) and directs it to the Minnesota Department of Health. The agency will distribute the funds via a competitive grant process similar to those it has overseen in the past. The HCAF is the identified funding source as this effort is in alignment with the intent of the fund to provide access to care by protecting staff and improving the quality of services by implementing additional safety measures.

Thank you for your consideration of this important proposal.

