STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 28, 2018

Senator Mark Johnson
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building Room 2105
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Michelle Benson
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building Room 3109
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Tony Lourey
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building Room 2211
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Erin Murphy
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
331 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Matt Dean
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
401 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Kelly Fenton
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
525 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Legislators:

Throughout my two terms as Governor, I have worked to expand access to affordable health care coverage for Minnesotans. That is why I strongly oppose a current proposal that would deny health care to thousands of Minnesotans.

This plan would take away health care from Minnesotans, particularly those who are living with disabilities and chronic conditions. The majority of Medicaid enrollees, 73 percent, live in families with an adult, who has a full-time job, and 66 percent work themselves. Over half of adults on Medical Assistance, ages 35-64, and a third of younger adults, ages 19-34, live with chronic conditions that would make it very difficult for them to work.

The proposed legislation would also impose significant new administrative burdens on county social service workers, without addressing the structural barriers that prevent people from working, such as lack of transportation and stable housing, criminal histories and age discrimination.

Since it became law over 50 years ago, Medicaid has shown that access to health care improves people's lives and our economy. Medical Assistance creates pathways out of poverty for people with disabilities, those with low incomes, and many older adults. It also covers over 40 percent of Minnesota's children.

My first Executive Order as Governor made Minnesota one of the first states to expand Medicaid in 2011. Federal funding from the Affordable Care Act helped us drive innovation and improve health outcomes, while saving money. I am proud of the progress we have made, and was dismayed, when Minnesota's uninsured rate increased last year to 6.3 percent, from a historic low of 4.3 percent in 2015. There are now 349,000 Minnesotans who do not have health insurance, which should be unacceptable to all of us.

Instead of imposing new barriers to health care coverage, I urge the Legislature to approve my proposal for a MinnesotaCare Buy-In program that will guarantee a high-quality, affordable option in every county. I stand ready to work with Legislators on real solutions to help people get the health care they need. Let us work together to expand access to health care, not take it away.

Sincerely,

Mark Dayton
Governor