



April 17, 2018

Senator Michelle Fischbach
Chair, Higher Education Finance & Policy
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113,
95 University Avenue W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Fischbach and Esteemed Committee Members:

On behalf of Medical Alley Association and its more than 650 members that make up Minnesota's health innovation and care industry, we are writing to thank you for including the establishment of a special revenue fund for the Minnesota Spinal Cord Injury and Traumatic Brain Injury Research Grant Program in SF3671.

This Grant Program funds research into new and innovative treatments and rehabilitation efforts for the functional improvement of people with spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries. It also helps keep the research and innovation in Minnesota, which is well-known for its health technology and care industry. This research is being done, for example, at world-renowned centers for research, such as Mayo Clinic and the University of Minnesota, among others.

Last session, the legislature funded the SCI/TBI Research Grant Program at \$3 million a year for FY2018 and 2019. At least twenty research proposals have been funded through this grant program since its inception in 2015 – including twelve in 2018. This proposed change enhances this already successful grant program.

Creating the special account may be a small, administrative change, but it makes several positive impacts on the industry. This account allows medical research to be done in a timeline typical for quality medical research, rather than the shorter state budget cycle. It also enables grant requests to be awarded based on their scientific merit, rather than timelines. Further, this change maintains the oversight of the SCI & TBI Research Council, ensuring that the high quality research done with the grants have appropriate fiscal control.

Medical Alley Association is committed to improving Minnesota's operating environment and supporting advancement in research and healthcare innovation for the benefits of patients around the globe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bobby Patrick, VI'.

Bobby Patrick, VI
Director, Government Relations
Medical Alley Association