



March 30, 2006

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Dear Sen. Betzold,

I am writing to express my serious concern for the ongoing attempt to modify the current MN statute related to newborn screening (SF 3344). In just a couple of years, the Minnesota model of public-private partnership has emerged as the most efficient and effective newborn screening program in the country. We have the best performance metrics, particularly the lowest false positive rate for metabolic disorders (0.08%; the average nationwide is above 0.5%).

Midwest states are sending senior public health officials to learn from us, other states have even inquired about outsourcing newborn screening testing to our state.

When it comes to newborn screening, Minnesota has climbed from average to top of the nation, and did so while adding provisions for destruction of residual blood spots and even results if parents and guardians desire to have it done so. These steps go beyond the norm in virtually all other states.

A perceived lack of familiarity with the process is not driven by any desire to deny parental rights, it is just a measure of the rarity of this kind of request. In the last two years, approximately 140,000 births, we are aware of only 13 requests filed by parents to have their children's screening sample and data destroyed.

I believe that the feelings, no matter how strong, of 0.09% of parents should hardly require a change of a statute that works, maximizes protection of the most vulnerable citizens of Minnesota, and brings respect and admiration to our public health and health care infrastructure.

Please contact me if I can be of further assistance on this matter.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Piero Rinaldo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Piero Rinaldo, MD
Professor of Laboratory Medicine