



2026 Legislative Priorities

Since 1994, the mission of Minnesota Rural Health Association (MRHA) (www.mnruralhealth.org) has been to strengthen the health, health care and well-being of rural Minnesotans through leadership, advocacy, education, and collaboration. Our members include rural hospitals, clinics, behavioral health providers, transportation providers, and others who are on the frontlines of delivering the care and services needed to address the health needs that rural communities face.

MRHA's priorities include:

- **Sustainability of Rural Non-Emergency Medical Transportation** –Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) in rural Minnesota are often funded through local solutions or regional infrastructure. Rural NEMT is under unendurable strain. Long distances, thin provider coverage, administrative complexity, and payment challenges create conditions where trips are being delayed, declined, or placed at risk. **MRHA supports:**
 - **A delay in the implementation of the single NEMT administrator model**
 - **Funding to ensure the sustainability of the rural transportation network**
 - **Regulatory and administrative changes that enables and encourages rural innovation to develop systems that best serves patients**
- **Innovation and Transformation** – Rural communities across Minnesota continue to face a steady erosion of access to essential healthcare services. The existing gaps in access stem from a complex set of interrelated challenges that undermine timely, patient-centered care and ultimately worsen health outcomes.
To reverse this trajectory, MRHA supports policy that enables innovation and transformation to maximize the effect of the Rural Health Transformation Fund to invest in new care models, technologies, and community-driven solutions. Strategic, sustained investment in innovation is essential to ensuring that rural Minnesotans can access the services and programs designed to meet their unique needs.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about these legislative priorities, please feel free to contact **Mark T. Jones, MRHA Executive Director** at mark@mnruralhealth or **(218)201-0098**. He is available to provide clarification, discuss implications, or support your engagement with these initiatives.