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Celebrating 120 years

There is nonstop activity at the Minnesota State Capitol as lawmakers craft legislation on topics ranging from the environment and taxes to health care. But I'm not writing to talk politics. During this incredibly busy time, I want to say, "Thank you."

I'm thankful because, on April 23, 1897, the Minnesota Legislature established Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare as the nation's first hospital specifically created to provide care for children who have disabilities. It was a novel concept at a time when medically complex children were often marginalized. Our founder, Arthur Gillette, M.D., believed there was a better way. He believed that with effective treatment, these children could go on to live full and productive lives.

Since 1897, Gillette has grown to annually serve more than 25,000 patients hailing from every Minnesota county. We have expanded our reach to provide families in greater Minnesota with care closer to their homes. We have moved from the shore of Lake Phalen to our current location, where the Minnesota State Capitol is visible from our skyway.

Despite all of these changes, our philosophy remains the same. We still believe that with the right acute and rehabilitative treatments, children who have complex, rare and traumatic conditions can achieve their goals and dreams. They can live healthy and happy lives.

Minnesota lawmakers have provided crucial support at many times throughout our history. Because of that support, we expanded our St. Paul hospital in 2011 to keep pace with growing demand for care. We are growing our telemedicine services in greater Minnesota and providing increased specialty dental care to children. Our legislators also have recognized the importance of Medical Assistance for Gillette patients, many of whom qualify based on their disability. In these and many more ways, lawmakers' decisions are improving the lives of the children and families they represent.

On April 25, our patients, families and employees will gather at the Minnesota State Capitol, where Gillette began 120 years ago. We will gather to celebrate 120 years of CAN. Over the last 120 years together, Minnesota and Gillette have changed the lives of thousands of children and families. So, most of all we will gather to tell Minnesota: Thank you for making it all possible.

Barbara Joers

The writer is president and CEO of Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.



**Gillette
Children's**

Specialty Healthcare

120 YEARS OF **CAN**



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