

RE: Support for HF3386

March 6, 2024

To Chair Jay Xiong and members of the Workforce Development Finance and Policy Committee:

Gender Justice is a legal and policy advocacy organization dedicated to advancing gender equity through the law. We believe that everyone has a right to live safely, with dignity and respect, and that it is not only a Minnesota value to protect our neighbors in this great state, but a responsibility to live up to the promises we have made by ensuring that Minnesota is a safe place for anyone to call home.

We are writing in support of LGBTQ relocation funds, HF 3386 (Finke). Last year, when many other states were attacking transgender people with discriminatory legislation and dangerous, dehumanizing rhetoric, you helped pass legislation to make Minnesota a trans refuge state. Since that time, those attacks, and our promise, have led many transgender people to come to call this state home as they seek the refuge we guaranteed. In the recently released results of the 2022 US Trans Survey, it was found that 47% of more than 90,000 respondents across all 50 states have thought about moving to a different state because of their own state government considering or passing legislation targeting them for unequal treatment. Meanwhile, clinics in Minnesota are reporting surges of new transgender patients seeking care<sup>1</sup>, and many trans community members speak of the rapidly growing number of people moving to Minnesota from out-of-state to find a safer quality of life.

When we made Minnesota a trans refuge state, it wasn't only passing a piece of legislation, it was promising hope to a people who have been targeted nationwide by a ruthless campaign of hate. We told trans people that Minnesota was different, that in Minnesota, anyone can live in their full authenticity without fearing for their well-being simply because of who they are. It is now our job to follow through on that promise.

The trans people who have come here seeking refuge are in dire need of access to housing, employment, and other resources to fulfill their basic needs. We at Gender Justice strongly support HF 3386 as a way to help meet that need, and to demonstrate that in Minnesota, our representatives can be counted on not only to make the right promises, but to back them with reliable resources and accountable action.

Trans people are people like anyone else, and have always existed. There is nothing new or controversial about trans existence. For too long, however, trans people have been forced to live in the shadows and margins of society as targets of violence, hate, and dehumanizing propaganda for those who seek to divide us. Minnesota is better than that. We know that no one's humanity should be up for debate, and that no one should have to live in fear or poverty simply because of who they are. Let us then put those values in practice, and just like last year, say in response to the hate: "Not in our state." We know that we can count on our legislators to do the right thing, and stand for Minnesotans' right to freedom, safety, and respect for all.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.georgefamilyfoundation.org/news/familytreeclinicstartrib>



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Please support HF3386 and help people make our state a home for trans people and their families.

Thank you for your support,  
Megan Peterson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Director, Gender Justice