



DATE: March 20, 2024
RE: Letter of Support for HF 2666 (Hollins): Basic Income Demonstration Project
TO: Chair Noor & honorable members of the committee.

The International Institute is committed to advancing social and economic opportunities so that communities throughout Minnesota can thrive. Access to financial stability and growth is a critical component of any flourishing community.

About Guaranteed Income Pilot for New Americans. The International Institute has seen how impactful guaranteed basic income projects can be. In 2021, our organization launched Guaranteed Income Pilot for New Americans, where we provided 25 families with \$750 in monthly income for a year, funded through private donations. Our program participants were either Afghans who came through the Humanitarian Parole Program or refugee families.

What we learned from our pilot. We know that families mostly spent their funding on rent and food for their families and we had quite a few families buy a car. As we know, in Minnesota, having a car is very important for finding a job, transporting children and getting around in the winter. \$750 per month is not enough for rent and living alone, but it is enough to ease minds and help stabilize families, especially if they were already working. We had people who were working in laundry that were medical doctors and engineers in their countries, so it allowed them to find jobs -- many times a second job that paid them more money -- which set the foundation for long-term stability for families.

Why invest in New Americans? New Americans made smart choices with that funding and that's going to be good for everybody. We need a higher skilled labor force, we need people at all levels in the labor market, and we want to make sure people have those opportunities so they can integrate quickly. This project provided participants with that opportunity.

You can check out coverage on KARE11 about our pilot program by viewing here:

<https://www.kare11.com/article/news/community/lifting-voices/guaranteed-income-pilot-new-americans-shows-positive-impacts/89-e04f2f4d-db0a-4837-a874-bef0f4b2e5cb>.

We encourage committee members to support HF 2666. We are particularly excited that this bill names 'individuals and families who have recently relocated to Minnesota from other states or countries' as a priority population, as it mirrors the population we served who had tremendous success in our pilot. This bill will enhance the state's ability to offer support that ensures people have the resources to afford childcare, transportation, job training, and accessible housing while maintaining pathways to financial independence.

Basic Income is a tested and demonstrably effective way to ensure Minnesotans have the income they need to increase their economic well-being and beyond. **We urge you to support HF 2666.**

If you have any questions regarding the International Institute's support for HF 2666, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Jane Graupman

Executive Director, International Institute of Minnesota