



February 6, 2023

Representative Tina Liebling
477 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Liebling,

I am writing to communicate support for HF 712 which increases financial support for Family Planning Special Projects. The Annex Teen Clinic has utilized funding from this grant program since 1982 and it is a crucial program to assure that all patients have access to services regardless of their insurance status.

Serving people effectively who come from underserved, uninsured and marginalized communities requires a multitude of policies and practices that can be resource intensive and not reimbursable through insurance programs. This is particularly true when serving adolescents seeking confidential sexual health care. Providing this care requires a level of trust that takes time and staff that are experienced and comfortable with the populations being served and the topic of sexual health.

Annex patients regularly report how valuable access to the services are for them and how unique their experience is compared to traditional health care settings. Support from FPSP is what allows the Annex Teen Clinic and similar clinics to provide this type of quality, accessible reproductive care.

The impact and value of this care is quite clear. The substantial reductions in unintended pregnancies among young people over the past decade is directly related to their ability to access quality health care services. Young people are quite capable of making great decisions for themselves if provided access to care and support from caring adults.

FPSP is not simply a grant program for clinics. It is a substantive investment with returns in cost savings from other public services as well as a powerful poverty fighting tool for individuals using these services.

While Minnesota is fortunate to have so many high-quality community clinics specializing in serving underserved populations it is imperative that we assure these clinics are supported and sustained for the future. The current level of FPSP is inadequate to support the financial needs of these safety net essential community providers. The costs associated with operating these clinics has continued to

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grow at the same time many traditional sources of support have disappeared. These services can not be provided based solely on insurance reimbursement.

We applaud Governor Walz and his administration for including this increase in the proposed budget and encourage the Minnesota House and Senate to support the request. This investment will pay dividends for years.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian Russ".

Brian Russ
Executive Director
Annex Teen Clinic