



March 2, 2021

I am writing in support of HF 1197 and HF 617. Home visiting is a wise investment for our children, families, and our state.

Decades of research underscores the importance of children's early experiences in laying the foundation for their growing brains. The quality of these early experiences shape brain development which impacts future social, cognitive and emotional competence. Research points to the value of parenting during a child's early years. High-quality home visiting programs can improve outcomes for children and families, particularly those that face added challenges such as teen or single parenthood, maternal depression and lack of social and financial supports.

Rigorous evaluation of high-quality home visiting programs has also shown positive impact on reducing incidences of child abuse and neglect, improvement in birth outcomes such as decreased pre-term births and low-birthweight babies, improved school readiness for children and increased high school graduation rates for mothers participating in the program. Cost-benefit analyses show that high quality home visiting programs offer returns on investment ranging from \$1.75 to \$5.70 for every dollar spent due to reduced costs of child protection, K-12 special education and grade retention, and criminal justice expenses.

Sincerely,

Nancy Jost

Director of Early Childhood

PO Box 318
Fergus Falls, MN 56538-0318

wcif.org
wci@wcif.org

(218) 739-2239
(800) 735-2239

