



Representative Fue Lee
Chair, Capital Investment
503 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 8, 2022

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for HF 3169 to childcare providers across the state before your committee. Our vision as a Coalition is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success. Our coalition is committed to advancing racial equity in our early childhood systems and advocating for policies that benefit Black, Indigenous and other children of color, their families and the programs that serve them.

HF 3169 demonstrates the critical childcare shortage across the state of Minnesota. Across the state, we have lost over 20,000 childcare slots in the last decade, with the greatest losses happening in Greater Minnesota. A lack of childcare will limit Minnesota's ability to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Employers around the state name childcare for their staff as a primary reason they are unable to hire and retain staff – supporting accessible, affordable and high-quality early childhood care and education is an economic imperative. We must support infrastructure around the state to develop new early childhood facilities and expand or improve our current early childhood facilities.

The Start Early Funders Coalition supports a robust early childhood system that supports a broad range of program types supported with prioritized state and federal funding is required to support the early childhood care and education business model and for our state's recovery. Infrastructure support is a critical component of a high-quality early childhood care and education system, and with support to hire high quality staff members, and provide families opportunities to access programs we can achieve the family supports our children and families need. We must maintain and continue to grow investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carrie Zelin Johnson".

Carrie Zelin Johnson
Start Early Funders Coalition Coordinator
Start Early Funders Coalition

The Start Early Funders Coalition for Children and Minnesota's Future is a collaboration of more than 15 members of Minnesota's philanthropic community. The Coalition provides critical leadership and funding for research, program development, public policy and grant making to improve early childhood efforts in Minnesota. We are working together to ensure every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success.