

March 12, 2022

Representative Tina Liebling  
Chair, Health Finance and Policy Committee

Rep. Liebling and Members of Health Finance and Policy Committee:

We are writing in strong support of HF 4099. I am Young-Hoon Ham, program manager at Korean Service Center (KSC) and KSC is a recipient of the Community Solutions Grant Program (CSF). Our program, 'Our Korean Kids in MN,' has been initiated by this fund and actively implemented in the Korean community in MN.

We are proud that KSC could start this very special, important community program for Korean children and families in MN with the support of a state fund for the very first time in more than 80 years of the Korean immigrant history in MN. This Community Solutions Grant enabled us to conduct a needs assessment to explore Korean immigrant parents' experiences, needs, and challenges relating to young children's wellbeing including mental, emotional, and behavioral health. What we learned from the survey is that there is a definite community need for community-wide awareness and level of knowledge on the children's mental health.

Based on its valuable outcome, KSC has been providing parenting workshops in a culturally and linguistically relevant manner with topics including self-reflection as immigrant parents, effective communication skills with children and how to talk about racism with children. We launched an online parenting resource hub to provide parenting information, local parenting resources, and a safe space where Korean parents can share their parenting experiences and resources. During the pandemic, we were unable to meet parents and children in person but could provide virtual parenting workshops only with parents and no child programs/activities could happen as planned. We are anticipating meeting them soon in person as the pandemic situation gets better.

This very first program for Korean children and parents in MN has been steadily growing and we believe that this can contribute to closing a gap that exists between the mainstream and the Korean community in MN. This is the reason that we strongly support HF 4099. We believe that the Community Solutions Grant program is an important strategy that addresses inequality by innovative solutions that our community can provide culturally relevant programs and services.

We strongly encourage you to support HF 4099. The collective health and prosperity of our state is tied to ensuring every child has what they need to thrive.

Sincerely,



Young-Hoon Ham, Ph.D.

CSF program manager

Korean Service Center