



Representative Dave Pinto  
Chair, Children and Families Finance & Policy Committee  
503 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Jan 30, 2023

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for HF 639, to support the Community Solutions for healthy child development grant program 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 will benefit low-income children, rural children and families as well as Black, Indigenous and children of color and their families; and the programs that serve them.

HF 639 recognizes the significance the Community Solutions Grants Program has played in communities across the State of Minnesota by investing in community driven and community engaged work. We have seen firsthand the impact Community Solutions Grants Program has had with funded partners on their ability to deeply engage with families, children and early childhood systems to improve the lives of communities of color and rural communities. The Community Solutions Grants Program has supported numerous Family, Friend and Neighbor efforts, supporting a critical element of our early childhood system that lacks deep investment and support. It is critical to support the reach and sustainability of high impact programs like the Community Solutions Grants Program. Communities closest to the problems are also closest to the solutions and are often the furthest from the resources. The Community Solutions Grants Program is a critical policy tool to solve this problem. We know that investment in these programs is necessary to support children and family's immediate and long-term health outcomes by improving the community conditions that drive health outcomes.

We support a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to a continuum of high-quality child care and early learning programs. We must maintain and continue to grow equitable investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Sincerely,

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