



March 21, 2023

Re: Supporting Grants Administration Proposals & the Addition of Census-Related Priorities

Dear State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Foundations (MCF) is a statewide association of grantmakers that is focused on ensuring Minnesota has a strong charitable sector and an inclusive democracy where everyone can be seen, counted, and heard.

Our 150+ members have deep grantmaking expertise, and we know that an investment in grants administration – staffing, technology, and administrative costs – is essential to producing grant decisions and outcomes that promote accountability and equity. **We support the efforts in HF 2940 to fund grants administration oversight, invest in a feasibility study and road map for an enterprise-wide grants management system, and provide reasonable grants administrative costs allowances to state agencies to ensure they can do their work well.**

MCF also asks the committee to add the Census-related priorities in the Governor’s proposed Department of Administration budget to the committee’s final finance omnibus bill. MCF was a leading convener of the [Minnesota Census Mobilization Partnership](#), focused on achieving a full, inclusive, and accurate 2020 Census count. The Partnership engaged more than 300 organizations and reached more than 1.3 million people, ultimately helping Minnesota achieve the highest self-response rate in the country and retaining eight Congressional seats. The Partnership has morphed into an ongoing effort, called the [Minnesota Census and Democracy Partnership](#), focused on promoting a more inclusive democracy and ensuring Minnesota learns from the 2020 Census efforts and prepares itself for 2030. **We encourage the committee to add the following Census-related priorities to the final finance omnibus bill:**

- 1) Funding for the State Demographic Center to increase staff capacity to meet current and growing demand for their services.** The Governor’s proposal of two additional FTEs would help community members access and interpret social, economic, and demographic data through trainings and resources. As nonprofits and community members engaged heavily in the 2020 Census and deepened their understanding of the value of this data for community decision making and funding, community interest and demand for data training and information has increased. These positions will help the Demographer’s Office meet community demand and prepare the state for the 2030 Census.
- 2) Exclude income earned as decennial Census workers from state calculations for certain benefits.** This is common in many other states and would make it easier for Minnesota to hire enumerators for the 2030 Census, particularly from historically undercounted communities. For the 2020 Census, hiring enough Census enumerators was a significant challenge.

Thank you for the proposed investments in grants administration, and we encourage the committee to consider adding the above Census priorities that are a part of the Governor’s proposed Department of Administration budget. If you have any questions, please contact Katina Mortensen, MCF public policy director (952-261-6063; kmortensen@mcf.org).

Sincerely,

Katina Mortensen
Director of Public Policy