



Representative Dave Pinto
Chair, Health and Human Services Finance & Policy Committee
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 3886 and HF 3887 to support voluntary home visiting for pregnant people and families with young children. Our vision 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.

The path to a healthy, prosperous, and equitable society is largely determined during the first three years of a child's life. A positive, healthy relationship with a parent or caregiving figure is the single most important determinant for successful development during the first three years of life. High quality voluntary home visiting programs are proven to be one of the best ways to intervene in the earliest family years because they help restore the critical infrastructure and support lacking in high risk families, and provide significant return on public investments. Home visiting programs also support the mental health of children and families, which is especially important during the pandemic while families are isolated and experiencing significant challenges.

Voluntary home visiting programs, as those funded by HF 3886 and HF 3887 provides the flexibility and access to programs to ensure cultural, linguistic and geographic diversity in programs that will be available to meet the complex needs of families. In rural communities where there is a lack of licensed nurses and social workers, flexibility in program type will ensure families across the state will still have access to these programs. When families access these voluntary home visiting programs, the impact on the child and family will pay long-term health dividends for those children and our health care system.

The Start Early Funders Coalition supports these investments in HF 3886 and HF 3887, and encourage sustainable funding sources to promote consistency in programming and are very thankful for the support of the committee. Please feel free to contact us if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Thank you,

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

Carrie Zelin Johnson
Start Early Funders Coalition Coordinator

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.



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