UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus *Department of English* *207 Lind Hall*
College of Liberal Arts *207 Church Street SE*
Minneapolis MN 55455
Office: 612-625-3363
Fax: 612-624-8228

Rep. Fue Lee (59A) and Rep. Mary Murphy (03B)
Chair and Vice Chair, Capital Investment Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

11 March 2021

Dear Rep. Lee and Rep. Murphy,

I'm writing to support the inclusion of FAWK's artistic and community work in the upcoming bonding bill. I have known the FAWK core members Saymoukda Vongsay, May Lee-Yang, and Naomi Ko since their student days at the University of Minnesota, and have watched with admiration as each of them has developed a unique artistic voice as well collaborated through FAWK. Their commitment to using performance and comedy to educate a broader public about issues of race, gender, and power has reached audiences in a variety of settings, from parking lots to classrooms to the Ordway Theatre. These are thoughtful and experienced teachers as well as performers who have demonstrated how incredibly effective it can be to make people think and laugh at the same time.

A new center would allow FAWK's innovative artistic, educational, and community work to flourish as the need for it grows even further with our changing Twin Cities demographics. And this support comes at an extremely crucial time. As I'm sure you are both aware, Asian American as well as other communities of color have faced additional challenges due to the pandemic as well as ideological divisions within our country. Community-based arts groups that have helped to address these needs have been hamstrung for the past year. Providing a stable home for FAWK would help these artists extend their reach as well as to continue their contributions to Asian American communities, work that is now more important than ever.

Sincerely yours,

Josephine Lee

Josephine Lee
Professor of English and Asian American Studies, University of Minnesota