

March 14, 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 the Charitable Works and Health Services Department director at Tserha Aryam Kidist Selassie, Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Minneapolis MN and we are recipients of the Community Solutions Grant Program. Our program supports low income immigrant children and families from Ethiopia living in Minnesota.

Due to the funds from the Community Solutions grant, we have been able to create a new family home visiting program and started to help multiple families. We were able to collaborate, plan and implement parent education classes in partnership with the ECFE program of Minneapolis Public School. We have also started an intergenerational program and built our capacity to create a new vision and hearing screening program. We have also expanded our capacity to provide chronic disease screening for our community.

We believe investing more funding into the Community Solutions Grant Program Will enable our minority communities to address the existing inequalities by bridging the systems gap, bringing services to the community in its own trusted settings, and utilizing culturally competent professionals from the community.

Therefore, we support HF 4099 because we believe it is a strategy that addresses inequality as well as amplifies the innovative solutions that leverage community assets, are culturally relevant, and center the experiences and dignity of those most impacted by inequity. Community Solutions Grant Program represents more than money, it is also recognition that communities of color, American Indian communities, and geographically dispersed communities have invaluable knowledge, and must be active and valued participants within the creation of solutions for their communities.

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.”

Tsion Mekonnen

Re'ese Adbarat Tserha Aryam Kidist Selassie, Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Charitable Works and Health Services Department Director

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