



Representative Tina Liebling
Chair, Health Finance and Policy
477 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 14, 2022

Mrs. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for HF 4099 to support the Community Solutions Grants 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 benefit Black, Indigenous and other children of color, their families and the programs that serve them.

HF 4099 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. 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.

The Start Early Funders Coalition supports a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to a continuum of high-quality early care and education programs. A broad range of program types, including initiatives supported through the Community Solutions Grants Program is required to support the families, children and our state's economic recovery. We must maintain and continue to grow investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Thank you,

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

Carrie Zelin Johnson
Start Early Funders Coalition Coordinator
Start Early Funders Coalition

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.



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.