



May 3, 2021

Dear Chair Abeler, Chair Benson, Chair Liebling, Chair Schultz, and Health and Human Services Conference Committee Members,

We urge the committee to accept the Senate position and include the \$1 million annual funding increase and formula change for the Community Action Grant (MCAG).

Minnesota Community Action Partnership represents the twenty-four Community Action Agencies (CAAs) that serve all 87 counties in Minnesota. Community Action Agencies provide holistic programs for Minnesotans with low incomes, ranging from Energy Assistance and Weatherization to Head Start to job training to Meals on Wheels and nutrition services.

Low-income Minnesotans have been hit hardest by the health and economic impacts of COVID-19, resulting in tremendous immediate and long-term needs across the state. Throughout the past year, Community Action Agencies have responded rapidly to these growing and changing needs. CAAs have helped people remain safely and stably housed throughout the pandemic through rent, mortgage and utility assistance; expanded their food delivery and nutrition programs; provided essential technology for remote work and school like hotspots and laptops; and connected virtually with program participants to prevent social isolation and improve mental health. During the recovery from the pandemic, CAAs will continue to play a vital role stabilizing our communities and helping low-income Minnesotans move out of poverty. MCAG is the backbone funding for Community Action and provides CAAs with flexible funding to meet the needs in each of their communities, and that has never been more crucial than during the coming years.

The formula change included in the Senate bill will create more equity for the smallest Tribal Nations, who also receive MCAG funding. Although the formula change will have monetary impacts on some of the CAAs and the larger Tribal Nations, the additional funding will ensure all Agencies and Tribes remain financially whole and have the resources needed to serve their communities.

Once again, we urge you to adopt the Senate position regarding the formula change and additional \$1 million annually for the Community Action Grant. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Grant
Executive Director, Minnesota Community Action Partnership