

HENNEPIN COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chair Mohamud Noor, Human Services Finance Committee
379 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Noor and Committee Members,

Hennepin County is committed to advancing social and economic opportunities so that our residents can thrive. Through our own pilot, *Raise the Baseline*, we are beginning to see how impactful a guaranteed basic income can be for families. Launched last year and aimed at families with at least one young child, 200 Hennepin families will receive direct payments for 12 months followed by a three month taper period. Though still in process, initial data and anecdotes from participants tell us that this support is life-changing.

Raise the Baseline is informed by best practices and tailored to best support families. Participating families will also be offered services, such as financial and budget counseling and job training resources and monthly payment amounts vary according to family size, increasing with each dependent child. This approach is consistent with other studies urging a “2-Gen” approach to administering economic assistance programs.

Because reducing the administrative burden on families is one of the key values of a GBI program, we focused on families that are already enrolled in county programs. This allowed identification of families that are experiencing a financial hardship due to or exacerbated by the pandemic while minimizing the amount of information we need to collect from families.

Following best practices and using existing data, we are optimistic about the results we will see in Hennepin County and know families across Minnesota could benefit from additional income. The possibility of a statewide pilot is exciting as we continue to learn how we can best support our residents. **We encourage committee members to support HF 2666.** This bill will enhance the state’s ability to offer support that ensures people have the resources to afford childcare, transportation, job training, and accessible housing while maintaining pathways to financial independence.

Sincerely,



Irene Fernando

Irene Fernando, Chair
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