



Minnesota Coalition
FOR FAMILY HOME VISITING

May 2, 2023

Dear Senator Wiklund, Representative Liebling, and Conferees,

The Minnesota Coalition for Family Home Visiting (MCFHV) wants to acknowledge the work of the chairs and members of these committees to prioritize families and their children during this legislative session, your historic investment will ensure more children and their families have access to the early childhood care and learning programs they need to have a great start in life. MCFHV appreciates your inclusion of the following provisions in their respective omnibus bills and requests that you advocate for them to be included in the conference committee's final bill.

Home Visiting

- We are particularly pleased to see funding in both the House and the Senate that will target priority populations that aren't currently served through family home visiting programs.
- Voluntary family home visiting services, whether short-term, mid-term or long-term, have proven successful in stabilizing families and improving health outcomes for families and young children. Its two-generation approach helps families access culturally appropriate community resources that are responsive to the needs of all families in Minnesota.
- We recommend supporting the Senate position to best support families and provide stabilizing support.

Doula Services

- Doulas play a significant role in reducing health care costs and related to cesarean and preterm births, but many doulas are inhibited from serving Medicaid patients due to that incredible low reimbursement rates and overcomplicated billing process. We support the Senate's position to address both concerns by increasing reimbursement rates and allowing for doulas to be directly reimbursed under Medicaid.
 - The Senate's position to increase reimbursement rates for doulas allows for Medicaid eligible families to access services that ordinarily cost more than twice the current maximum Medicaid reimbursement rate.
 - We are pleased to see the elimination of the doula NPI number, which allows doulas to bill Medicaid directly, is supported by both the House and Senate.

Medicaid 12-month Eligibility

- We are thrilled that both the House and the Senate agree that providing 12 months of continuous Medicaid eligibility for all children, particularly Minnesota's youngest children under the age of six, will ensure that all children are able to access the care they need to address their health concerns and access routine well-child visits.
- These changes will help families attain stability and avoid losing coverage due to administrative errors, "churn", or "funding cliffs" that inhibit families from accepting seasonal bonuses and small raises.

Community Solutions for Healthy Child Development Grant Program

- Robust ongoing funding, as appropriated by the Senate, will help Minnesota's state and community leaders work together to best meet the unique challenges that exist within communities of color and Indigenous communities.
- Community Solutions are aimed at improving perinatal health, child well-being, and community connections to promote the healthy growth and development of young children and positively position families for long-term stability.

Healthy Beginnings, Healthy Families

- Ongoing funding of the Healthy Beginning, Healthy Families Program, as appropriated by the Senate, will keep justice-involved parents involved in the growth and development of their young children.
- The benefits of keeping babies with their parents include improved parent-child attachment, reduced recidivism, re-entry support for parents returning to the community and increased family stability.

Lead Remediation in Schools & Child Care Settings

- We are pleased to see robust investment, by both the House and Senate, to assess and remediate all care and learning environments because no amount of lead is safe for babies and young children.
- Lead exposure in young children exponentially increases their odds of permanently impaired growth and development. The CDC has found that even low levels of lead in children may result in impaired growth, cognitive and learning disabilities, hearing problems, nerve damage, blood diseases, and other severe health outcomes.

Help Me Connect

- Investing in the coordination between federal, state, and local health agencies will help parents and families navigate the early childhood health care system and connect with the programs and resources needed to address health disparities that disproportionately impact communities of color.
- We believe maintaining this resource will require ongoing funding, as appropriated by the Senate, to help families across the state access the care they need for their families.

Thank you,

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