



March 23, 2022

Chair Rich Draheim
Senate Housing Finance & Policy Committee
3227 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Draheim and Housing Finance & Policy Committee Members:

Minnesota's Prenatal to Three Coalition (PN-3) writes today in support for the Homework Starts with Home Program included in SF 3994. The Homework Starts with Home program provides important educational, and learning supports to families with minor children experiencing homelessness or highly mobile families. Funding also targets families with younger minor children who have not yet begun school to help promote learning opportunities during stressful times.

A child's overall development and life outcomes are shaped and influenced by the dynamic interplay of cumulative experiences and buffered by relationships. Housing stability and access to educational opportunities can shape a lifetime of positive health and economic outcomes for young children experiencing homelessness. Homework Starts with Home program attends to the chronic stress experienced by these children and families by providing opportunities for intentional learning and connection with children and families.

The Coalition believes this funding would be extremely timely in addressing the challenges that have been compounded by COVID-19. In Minnesota, the pandemic exacerbated several health, wealth and educational disparities that exist. Communities of color and Indigenous communities have disproportionately been impacted by the pandemic¹, seeing greater exposure and positivity rates than their white peers. This is especially true for families experiencing homelessness.

We hope you will join us in supporting Homework Starts with Home in SF 3994.

Thank you,

Deb Fitzpatrick,
Children's Defense Funds-MN,
Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
West Central Initiative,
Co-Chair

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn,
MN Prenatal to Three Coalition,
Coordinator

¹ State of Minnesota COVID Dashboard (as of March 23, 2022; <https://mn.gov/covid19/data/data-by-race-ethnicity/index.jsp>)