



February 28, 2023

Chair Steve Cwodzinski
Senate Education Policy Committee
Re: Financial Literacy Education (HF651/SF901)

Chair Cwodzinski and Members,

The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage supports the Personal Finance Course Requirement proposal (HF651/SF901) as a necessary step toward improving financial literacy and financial wellbeing in Minnesota.

Financial literacy is an important element of financial wellness, and financial illiteracy tends to correlate with financial hardship. People with greater financial literacy are more likely to save for retirement and less likely to be constrained by debt. The available data shows major racial and gendered gaps in personal finance knowledge among U.S. adults. African Americans have lower rates of financial literacy than their white counterparts and the national average. Generally, financial know-how is greater among men, older adults, and people with more formal education and higher incomes.

Our Council supports statewide efforts to equip African Heritage students and families with resources that improve financial literacy and wellness. Adding a personal finance course to Minnesota's high school graduation requirements would provide foundational knowledge that can improve long-term decision-making related to household budgeting, homebuying, loan borrowing, savings, and investment opportunities. While this is an important step, we also urge the 2023 Legislature to provide African Heritage students and families with greater finance capital and resource capabilities with which these students and families can more adequately combat the structural burdens of financial illiteracy and indebtedness. Thanks for considering this request. Please support HF651/SF901.

Sincerely,

Linda Sloan | CMAH Executive Director
Theodore Rose | CMAH Policy Director
Rashaunea Ambers-Winston | CMAH Policy Intern

The Minnesota Legislature empowered the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies, and procedures of the State of Minnesota. Generally, the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on issues confronting People of African Heritage;*
- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on statutes, rules, and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota;*
- Serving as a liaison to the federal government, local government units and private organizations on matters relating to People of African Heritage in Minnesota;*
- Implementing programs designed to solve problems of People of African Heritage when authorized by statute, rule or order; and*
- Publicizing the accomplishments of People of African Heritage and their contributions to the state.*