

Jan 30, 2023

Dear Members of the State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee,

Youthpraise is writing in support of HF 158/SF 194 establishing the Minnesota Youth Advisory Council. As an organization that espouses youth leadership, with youth comprising 50% of our governing body, we believe that it is crucial for young voices to be heard in policy development and decision-making processes. The purpose of the council aligns with our organization's mission to increase equity with and for Minnesota's low-income and racially diverse youth. Youthpraise wants young people to be empowered and have a platform to share their perspectives and experiences to influence legislation in our state. Establishing this council with its own staff would go far to enshrine youth voice in our government processes.

It is critical that demographic composition be a key component of the council. We appreciate that the bill strives to accurately reflect the youth community in Minnesota and that members are appointed through a process involving both the governor and the legislative members.

We believe that the executive director and the staff appointed by the Legislative Coordinating Commission will play a critical role in ensuring that the council functions effectively and efficiently. The training and support provided by the Commissioner of Administration and the Attorney General will also be invaluable in ensuring that the council is able to fulfill its purpose. However, we know all too well how critical it is that adult allies be prepared to fully embrace young people and their talents, experiences, and perspectives.

We believe that the establishment of the Minnesota Youth Advisory Council through HF 158/SF 194 will bring a critical perspective to policymaking and provide an opportunity for youth to have a meaningful impact on issues that affect their lives and communities. We support the proposed bill wholeheartedly and look forward to seeing the council come to fruition.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Marcus Pope,
President