

Chair Melissa Wiklund
Senate Health and Human Services Committee
95 University Ave W, St Paul, MN 55103

Senator Wiklund and Members of Health and Human Services Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SF 402. Joyce Preschool is a almost 60 year old organization with a deep commitment to the students and families it serves in South Minneapolis. We have generations of leaders from our dual-immersion program.

We understand that in order for Black, Indigenous, and families of color to thrive, we must be innovative to tackle and close some of this country's worst disparities tied to child wellbeing for children of color and American Indian children such as health, education, infant mortality indicators. These disparities exist because our public policies don't leverage the existing strengths of communities. The Community Solutions Grant Program is a strategy by which we can begin to address the disparities in resources to specific communities. It leverages the assets in the communities to address their problems. It brings those who are most impacted into the decision-making process.

We support SF 402 because we believe it is a strategy that addresses inequality as well as amplifies the innovative solutions that leverage community assets, are culturally relevant, and center the experiences and dignity of those most impacted by inequity. Community Solutions Grant Program represents more than money, it is also recognition that communities of color, American Indian communities, and geographically dispersed communities have invaluable knowledge, and must be active and valued participants within the creation of solutions for their communities.

We strongly encourage you to support SF 402. Sustained funding over time will allow communities the opportunity to refine their solutions, extend their reach, and ultimately set up this generation of children for success.

Sincerely,

Ryan Mulso & Joyce Preschool Community

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Joyce Preschool

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