



Senator Melissa Wiklund  
Chair, Health and Human Services  
95 University Ave W  
Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 17, 2023

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for SF 2606, to address equitable compensation of the child care and early learning educators before your committee. Our vision as a Coalition is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success. Our coalition is committed to advancing racial equity in our early childhood systems and advocating for policies that will benefit low-income children, rural children and families as well as Black, Indigenous and children of color and their families; and the programs that serve them.

The early childhood workforce is instrumental in providing quality early childhood care and education to children, however they do not receive the needed supports and resources to thrive in the profession. High quality early childhood care and education requires a well-compensated, educated and trained workforce and we believe when early childhood care and education professionals are supported and resourced – children thrive. As our state builds the resources to ensure affordability and accessibility of child care and early learning, it is essential that we not forget the workforce behind the workforce, and address long-term compensation reforms needed to ensure early childhood educators can continue to do the most critical education a child will receive. SF 2606 addresses the early childhood workforce challenge with a robust set of programs building additional pathways for educators, improving post-secondary training, and establishing a workforce compensation task force to see through the vision of the Great Start Task Force.

We support a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to a continuum of high-quality child care and early learning programs. We must maintain and continue to grow equitable investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Sincerely,

Carrie Zelin  
Johnson  
Start Early Funder  
Coalition Coordinator

Allison Corrado  
Public Policy  
Committee

Denise Mayotte  
Public Policy  
Committee

Nancy Jost  
Public Policy  
Committee