

March 22, 2023

Dear Madame Chair Wiklund and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee:

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs is very pleased to know that Governor Walz and Lt. Governor Flanagan included the Community Solutions for Healthy Child Development grant in their Department of Health budget bill SF2995. The Council supports community organizations' request to also include SF402 in the Senate Health and Human Services Omnibus budget bill. We hope you will join their recommendations to give this program the permanent funding needed.

As it has been successfully proven in the recent past with the first pilot grants, this program would continue to allow cultural communities across the state the flexibility to advance locally generated approaches to improve measures of well-being, based on a broad subset of child well-being outcomes from prenatal to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Organizations like Centro Tyrone Guzmán, CLUES, and La Red in the Latino community have been able to serve more families and children thanks to these grants.

This program addresses geographic equity by prioritizing grant funding to areas of the state with high proportions of communities of color and American Indian communities. As a Council, we have conducted listening sessions across the state and, when it comes to early childhood education, we have heard first-hand the unique differences and needs in Greater Minnesota and the Metro area. We have seen first-hand that our respective communities are best positioned to analyze their unique strengths and this bill gives them the ability to leverage community expertise and work towards eliminating early childhood health disparities.

We appreciate your consideration and ask for your support for the long-term sustainability of this program.

Sincerely,



Rosa Tock, Executive Director