



March 21, 2023

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

**Subject: Letter of Support for Community Solutions Provisions of SF 2995**

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members,

The Multicultural Autism Action Network is a non-profit organization that serves children with disabilities and their families in our diverse communities in Minnesota. We are grateful to the Governor and Lt. Governor for including the Community Solutions for Healthy Child Development Grant Program in their Department of Health budget bill, SF 2995, and we are writing to encourage the committee to include it in the Senate Health and Human Services omnibus bill.

The Community Solutions program uses an equity-centered approach to improve well-being for children of color and American Indian children in Minnesota prenatal to grade 3. Our organization was fortunate to be a grantee under this program, and worked with community members to teach families from diverse communities how to craft videos about their experiences parenting children with disabilities. These videos sought to build community support for families, reduce feelings of isolation, address community specific issues around disability stigma, and normalize the experience of parenting a child with a disability,

In addition to the work empowering families to share their stories, the project had the added benefit of bringing our organization together with other grantees all committed to the work of improving outcomes for our children from diverse communities. We were honored to be part of this incredible cohort of organizations led by members of the communities which they served.

Countless studies have shown that the best outcomes for children occur when efforts are led from within, and this we respectfully asked for your continued support of the Community Solutions Grant Program.

Sincerely,

Multicultural Autism Action Network

Fatima Molas. Co-founder  
Delia Samuel. Co-founder  
Rufo Jiru. Board Member  
Maren Christenson Hofer, Executive Director

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