



March 31, 2023

**Re: Support Article 13, Section 18 of the Senate Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill SF 2995, Community Solutions for Healthy Child Development Grant Program.**

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee,

At Voices for Racial Justice, we envision a world without racism that honors the culture, knowledge, power, and healing of Black, Indigenous, and communities of color. We use policy as a transformational tool to build power through collective cultural & healing strategies for racial justice across Minnesota. We deeply celebrate the Community Solutions Grant Program funding outlined **in Article 13, Section 18 of the Senate Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill SF 2995.**

The inclusion of this initiative represents a meaningful policy effort in our State and a step closer to racial justice.

For decades, capitalism, cis-heteropatriarchy, and white supremacy have worked together to keep BIPOC communities away from policy-making spaces. These interlocking gears of oppression result in the perpetuation of policies that increment the disparities between white people and BIPOC communities. It is a fact that, as of today, our State is a paradox itself, where it is one of the best States to live in for whites while being the worst state to live in for communities of color (Professor Sam Myers). Therefore it is imperative to fund programs designed for and with BIPOC communities to break the cycle of exclusion and open the door for everyone in the state to thrive.

The Community Solutions program is crucial for us as it recognizes BIPOC communities' essential knowledge to implement successful solutions for our daily struggles. It demonstrates the importance of ALWAYS including us in any policy effort. We celebrate the consideration to allocate funding for this program as it represents an initiative that shows what's possible when we work from a place of deep love and deep care for each other, especially for the future of our state, our BIPOC children.

We strongly encourage you to support **SF 2995**. It includes a strategy that addresses inequality as well as amplifies innovative solutions that leverage community assets, are culturally relevant, and center the experiences and dignity of those most impacted by inequities. Community Solutions Grant Program represents more than money; it is also recognition that communities of color and geographically dispersed communities have invaluable knowledge and must be active and valued participants in creating solutions for their communities.

Sincerely,

**Nicole Donoso** (She/her)

Policy & Democracy Organizer

