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March 1, 2023

Senator Bobby Joe Champion  
3401 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Champion and members of the Senate Jobs and Economic Development Committee:

On behalf of the Greater Minnesota Partnership, and our business, local government, chamber of commerce, foundation, and nonprofit members, I write today in strong support of SF1611.

SF1611 will invest \$6 million in the Initiative Foundations to:

- Help communities identify and implement ways to address local child care shortages;
- Provide technical assistance to child care providers looking to remain in the industry, and child care entrepreneurs looking to enter the industry;
- Help more providers to participate in the state's child care quality program, Parent Aware; and
- Foster innovation in Greater Minnesota, to help find the next solution to our more than 42,000 child care slot deficit.

To see what impact the Initiative Foundations can have, you do not need to look any further than what they are currently doing. This bill is not asking the six Initiative Foundations to do anything new. It is just asking them to do more of what they are already doing successfully, and giving them the resources to do it. This is why Governor Walz included funding for the foundations in his budget.

We are fortunate to have the Initiative Foundations serving the 80 counties of Greater Minnesota. Whether it is their child care programming, their business lending programs, or the state turning to them to distribute the Covid-19 business and community support funds, the Initiative Foundations play a critical role in addressing the economic development challenges we face, as well helping to unleash the economic prosperity opportunities we have. This investment will give the Initiative Foundations the resources needed to help our communities and our child care providers solve our unacceptable 42,000 child care slot deficit.

Thank you for hearing SF1611, and I urge you to make this investment this year.

With gratitude,

Scott H. McMahon  
Executive Director

*The Greater Minnesota Partnership advocates for public policies and investments that stimulate prosperity throughout Greater Minnesota.*