



African American Leadership Forum

SUPPORT FOR SF 1549 – COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH JUSTICE FUNDING

March 16, 2023

Chair Ron Latz
Judiciary and Public Safety Committee
1200 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Latz and Committee Members:

The African American Leadership Forum (AALF) is a movement of more than 5,000 African American leaders, institutions, allies, and systems that come together to collaborate and champion solutions that improve the lives and experience of African Americans in Minnesota. For 15 years, AALF Twin Cities has harnessed the collective power of Black communities to solve complex social problems. Our goal is to build a just and healthy society that works equally well for everyone.

The African American Leadership Forum expresses its strong support for SF 1549, which provides needed funding for youth prevention, intervention, and barrier reduction services to disrupt youth involvement in the criminal legal system. Investing in community-based resources to positively engage young people is a top public safety priority for AALF, as expressed in our 2023 Legislative Priorities. Our network has suffered from the disinvestment in resources and activities for youth and we see the correlation to youth involvement in the juvenile justice system. The more we can invest on the front end to prevent and intervene early with youth, the more we can ensure they have a prosperous future. There are several innovative community-based programs serving African American youth specifically that would benefit greatly from the proposed funding in this bill, including several AALF partners. We thank the Legislature for hearing this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill and we ask for your support of SF 1549.

Sincerely,

Amber Jones
Managing Director, Public Policy
African American Leadership Forum