Chair Foung Hawj Environment, Climate, and Legacy Assistant Majority Leader, MN State Senate 95 University Avenue W. Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3231 St. Paul, MN 55155 651-296-5285

Dear Chair Hawj:

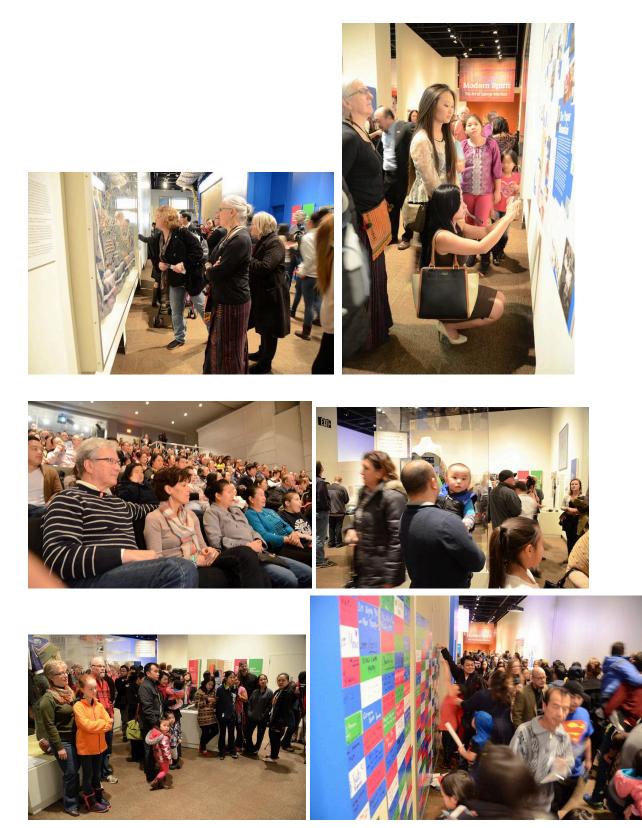
I am writing this letter to testify and asking you and your committee's full support of the SF No. 5065/HF No. 4996, which is "appropriating money to celebrate 50 years of Hmong and Southeast Asian communities in Minnesota." All of your support of this legislation will provide the Southeast Asian communities and/or organizations the opportunities to organize, curate, and develop educational programs for all Minnesotans to come learn about their sacrifices and human stories that began here 50 years ago. This Anniversary will have life-changing, strong impacts for these communities and all Minnesotans as they come to pay tribute, honor, celebrate, and bring closure and healing from the Vietnam War Era that tore their homelands and lives apart.

I experienced first-hand the positive impacts that Legacy dollars have had on my Hmong community. In 2015, I was the co-curator of the "We Are Hmong Minnesota" exhibit at the MN History Center to commemorate the Hmong's 40th Anniversary of migrating to Minnesota that began in 1975. I volunteered for the most part, but the outcome had a tremendous cultural impact on the Center and the communities. This celebration - through exhibits, community gatherings, and story-telling - brought both Hmong and non-Hmong to come together to learn about each other's narratives. For the Hmong students, this celebration gave them inspiration and the opportunity to learn about their history and identity. For the Hmong parents, they felt appreciated that their stories are being honored and not forgotten.

The Legacy funds from this bill will have positive outcomes for our underserved SE Asian communities as they plan and implement programs to honor and commemorate a part of our State of Minnesota's heritages and legacies. Shall you or any of your committee members have questions regarding this letter, please feel free to reach me by email at <u>vangminnesota@gmail.com</u>.

Sincerely,

Noah Vang Hmong Community Researcher St. Paul, MN 55130 Community impacts from the "We Are Hmong Minnesota" exhibit, celebrating the Hmong's 40th Anniversary at the MN History Center in 2015:



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