



March 18, 2024

Senator Steve Cwodzinski  
Senator Zaynab Mohamed  
Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: **SUPPORT for SF 4796**

Dear Senators Cwodzinski and Mohamed,

I'm writing on behalf of the National Association of Minority Contractors, Upper Midwest Chapter (NAMC), to express our strong support for the above referenced bill that you have authored.

This bill will authorize Hennepin County to expand its use of its set-aside contracting authority, to award contracts to construction firms, to promote hiring and on-the-job training for ex-offenders.

In recent years, the construction industry has struggled to recruit and employ enough workers to meet the ever-increasing demand created by public and private owners. Yet in communities of Color, where the owners and employees of our member companies live, we continue to see underemployment of our youth. This dichotomy highlights the need for the State and for local governments to create career pathways for underemployed youth to move into well-paying jobs.

Hennepin County created a program that trains probationers in basic construction skills and provides them with on-the-job training remodeling tax-forfeited houses. The county wants to expand this program to other project types by using its set-aside contracting authority. The bill will enable the county to use this authority to promote the employment and training of more underemployed youth, as they progress through their probationary periods.

These are the reasons we strongly support this bill and wish to thank you for authoring it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marvin Smith".

Marvin Smith, President  
NAMC, Upper Midwest Region