



April 2, 2024

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Health & Human Services Committee
Minnesota Senate Building | Room 1100
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members:


Minnesota's Prenatal to Three Coalition (PN-3) writes to you in support of SF 4807, to fund the continuation of critically important lactation consultation and education in Minnesota's African American community. Chosen Vessels Midwifery Services is a trusted community partner that works to address health disparities by destigmatizing breastfeeding and providing direct support to pregnant and parenting people.

Institutional racism has resulted in the reciprocation of distrust between communities and the healthcare system. The historical trauma of slavery and the use of wet nurses in the past has resulted in the continued cultural stigmatization of breastfeeding in the African American community. This stigma has created a barrier to accessing quality lactation consultation and continues to negatively impact African American birth outcomes and breastfeeding rates.

Chosen Vessels Midwifery Services offers a trusted space and support for pregnant and lactating African American people to reach their breastfeeding goals. Human breast milk boosts the child's immune system and lowers their risk for numerous chronic diseases while supporting the physical and mental health of the breastfeeding person during postpartum period.

Please join us in supporting SF 4807, to help Chosen Vessels Midwifery Services continue to do the critical work of supporting healthy babies and educating families in Minnesota's African American community.

Thank you,

Deb Fitzpatrick,
Children's Defense Funds-MN, 
Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
West Central Initiative,
Co-Chair

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn
MN Prenatal to Three (PN-3) Coalition
Coalition Coordinator