



1 April 2024

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Health & Human Services Committee
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 1100

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

The Birth Justice Collaborative is writing to request your support of SF 5032, a bill to conduct a study on the needs and best ways to support pregnant and parenting homeless youth.

Unhoused pregnant and parenting youth are a vulnerable group that often experience higher barriers to social services and quality perinatal healthcare. Most unhoused pregnant and parenting youth find themselves ineligible for traditional youth shelters and because of these barriers, unhoused pregnant youth are more likely to experience premature births, complications, and in utero substance exposure.

Not only is this traumatic for a young parent, but research also shows that experiencing homelessness as a baby or young child is disruptive to the critical early brain development that all future learning is dependent on. Without stable housing and with limited access to critical social services and support, the children of unhoused youth are more likely to be separated from their parents and entered the child welfare system.

The Birth Justice Collaborative urges you to join us in supporting SF 5032, a study to identify and uplift the best ways to empower unhoused pregnant and parenting youth, and to positively position them to support the healthy growth and development of their children.

Please contact Corenia Smith at corenia@collectiveactionlab.com with any questions, concerns, or for more information about the Birth Justice Collaborative.

Thank you,

The Birth Justice Collaborative

Cultural Wellness Center,
Division of Indian Work,
Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center,
Native American Community Clinic,
Liberty Northside Healing Space

