



Senator Omar Fateh
Chair, Higher Education Committee
3219 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

April 16, 2024

Mr. Chair and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we are writing to express our enthusiastic support for S.F. 3806, expressing our strong support for the bill relating to higher education and the provision of matching funds for childcare programs. We believe that investing in childcare facilities on college campuses is a vital step towards ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds.

The proposed appropriation of funds, as outlined in the bill, demonstrates a proactive approach to addressing the challenges faced by many students with young children who struggle to balance their academic pursuits with the responsibilities of childcare. By partnering with the National Head Start Association and the Association of Community College Trustees to establish Head Start centers on college campuses, we are not only supporting the educational needs of parents but also fostering a supportive environment conducive to the holistic development of their children.

The allocation of funds for renovating physical spaces for childcare within public higher education institutions signifies a commitment to creating inclusive learning environments that accommodate the diverse needs of students. These renovations will not only enhance the accessibility and quality of childcare services but also contribute to the overall well-being and success of student-parents within the academic community.

Moreover, we commend the provision for matching funds to postsecondary institutions participating in the postsecondary childcare grant program. By leveraging federal childcare funding, including resources from the Head Start and Childcare Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) programs, we can maximize the impact of state investments and extend support to those institutions that serve low-income students with the greatest need.

We urge you to support this bill for the appropriation of funds to expand childcare programs in higher education. By prioritizing the needs of student-parents and their families, we uphold the values of equity and opportunity that lie at the heart of our educational system. Together, let us work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive environment where every student has the resources and support, they need to thrive academically and personally.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Start Early Funders Coalition
Carrie Zelin Johnson, Start Early Funders Coalition Coordinator
Allison Corrado, Public Policy Committee
Inam A., Public Policy Committee