

March 25, 2024

Chair Bobby Joe Champion
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building, 3221
St. Paul, MN 55115

Dear Chair Champion and Members of the Senate Jobs Committee,

My name is Laura Boller, and I am writing this letter to support SF4914 on behalf of Laurabeaty LLC, a small business I founded three years ago. I am half Korean and adopted. Growing up, I struggled a lot with my identity and fitting into two different worlds, which led me to learn more about my Korean culture and to connect with and befriend other Korean adoptees and people of color in Minnesota. Through this experience, I found that there were not many choices for people of color when it comes to their wedding and beauty needs. I understand this struggle of finding one's identity and fitting into dual identities. This personal experience propelled me to establish my own business.

My team and I offer on location hair and makeup services for weddings and special events. When starting my business, my goal was to foster inclusivity within the Minnesota wedding industry, particularly for couples of color and for those having multicultural weddings. However, the journey of launching my business was fraught with challenges, primarily due to a lack of financial resources. As a woman of color, young entrepreneur, and startup business owner, accessing traditional avenues such as bank loans and state and federal funding programs proved incredibly daunting.

Thanks to CAAL's Stronger Together Small Business Fund, I was able to not only start my business but sustain its operations for the past three years. This support enabled me to participate in significant opportunities, such as the first-ever Asian New York Fashion Week where I provided hair services for models of color. It allowed me to invest in my makeup kit, ensuring it includes inclusive shades for airbrush makeup catering to diverse skin tones. I am proud to say my working in the beauty industry is not only for contributing economic development but also diversity and inclusion in Minnesota.

I urge you to support the funding opportunity to CAAL this year. It's imperative for the continued success and resilience of small businesses owned by Asian Women like mine, which play a vital role in our community's economic landscape.

Best,

Laura Boller

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