March 25, 2024

Chair Ron Latz
3105 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Hello Chair Latz and members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Ayada Leads to express our enthusiastic support for Senate File 3994, the Minnesota Voter Rights Act (MNVRA). This legislation plays a crucial role in ensuring equitable access to the electoral process for all Minnesotans, particularly immigrant and refugee communities.

The MNVRA provides voters with the necessary tools to challenge discriminatory voting policies, including insufficient language access at polling places. This is a significant step towards addressing the barriers faced by immigrant and refugee communities, whose native languages may not be English. By allowing voters to challenge inadequate language access through legal avenues, the MNVRA empowers these communities to assert their rights and participate fully in our democracy.

The findings of the 2015 Wilder Research Twin Cities study underscore the importance of initiatives like the MNVRA. Policymakers and advocates must actively work to address the barriers to voting and civic engagement faced by immigrant and refugee communities. Voter outreach efforts should prioritize increasing access to alternate-language voter registration forms and reducing barriers to voting, both of which are addressed by the MNVRA.

Senate File 3994 aligns closely with the goals and values of Ayada Leads. We believe that every eligible voter should have equal access to the electoral process, regardless of their language background or immigration status. By supporting the MNVRA, we demonstrate our commitment to advancing equity, inclusion, and democratic participation in Minnesota.

We urge you to support Senate File 3994 and work towards its swift passage. Together, we can ensure that all Minnesotans have the opportunity to exercise their fundamental right to vote and contribute to our vibrant democracy.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ayada Leads