

## Senate file SF2543 Handout

Hmong and Lao people started relocating to Minnesota after the Vietnam War in 1975.



A U.S. Air Force Bell UH-1P from the 20th Special Operations Squadron "Green Hornets" at a base in Laos, 1970.

Based on 2020 data, the Hmong American population in Minnesota was about 90,000, and it was the largest ethnic Asian group in the state. The Hmong community has significantly influenced Minnesota's culture, contributing to its diverse landscape. Approximately 94.6 % live in the Twin Cities and approximately 40 % (32,000) live in the Greater East Side Saint Paul. The Hmong community in Minnesota

has a significant economic impact, with an estimated \$2 billion economy encompassing a billion dollars in buying power, 35,000 workers, 9,000 businesses, and Hmong Minnesotans paying an estimated \$138 million in state and local taxes.

Hmong people have all started to make Minnesota their homes. They are living and working in our communities, supporting businesses, creating investment opportunities. Hmong people are helping to grow Minnesota.

### **The Hmong Experience Minnesota**



"I was one with a people who had lived a long time, traveled across many lands, a people clinging to each other for a reminder, a promise, a home.....so we could heal..."

Kao Kalia Yang, *The Song Poet*

Dr. Bruce Corrie, 2023

Photo Credit: Pang Foua Xiong

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**INCOME GROWTH:** The Minnesota Tax Incidence Study Over the years estimates that a typical Minnesotan household pays around 11-12 percent of their income on state and local taxes. Based on the tax incidence studies we can estimate that the growth in tax payments by the Hmong community in Minnesota grew from an annual \$34 million in 2000 to around \$286 million in 2021.

### **The Hmong Economy Minnesota**



Photo Credit: Pang Foua Xiong

Dr. Bruce Corrie, 2023

### **Income Growth**

2000  
\$311 Million

2021  
**\$2.3 Billion**

ACS 2021, Census 2000

02

The SE Asian Music Festival (SEAMF) is the 50-year celebration of Hmong and Lao music. The plan is to organize and host a music festival on the East side of Saint Paul by bringing Hmong, Lao and other SE Asian music artists to showcase traditional and modern music. This event will contribute to positive economic impact to the region and promote Minnesota's cultural significance.

This Art, Culture, and Heritage bill would provide recognition and support for Lao community. Passing this will show that Minnesotans recognize the importance of all communities within our borders. This bill will allow our communities to demonstrate our art, culture, and heritage with our mainstream brethren.



US President Barack Obama greets monks as he tours the Wat Xieng Thong Buddhist Temple in Luang Prabang, September 2016.



Lao in traditional costume dancing

The cross-cultural benefits of providing support to art, culture, and heritage projects go beyond the initial investment. Supporting these projects allowing community development, socially appropriate interactions, positive reinforcement in relationships. Through art, we can identify culturally significant details that may be missed through

our typical day-to-day interactions. The funding for art, culture, and heritage project will go to Siengkane Lao MN. We will be able to hold events such as teaching Lao dance, culture art projects, storytelling, and other interactive initiatives. Through this funding, Minnesotans will be able to learn about our beautiful vibrant culture and history of Lao people. We would be able to preserve and mobilize to younger generation to be proud of their heritage.

The Lao Dance Class, is to provide a platform for adults, youth and young Lao Americans to connect to their roots through the arts by providing a safe environment where they can learn, practice and gain their experiences that they may not be familiar with.



Lao traditional, Blessing dance



Economic and Cultural Impacts:

Job creation: support job creation in hospitality, restaurants, hotels, and other local businesses.

Tourism: contributes to Minnesota's unique image as a state and attracts tourists and increases tourism-related economic activity.

Projected attendance: 10,000

Cultural significance: help enliven the local cultural landscape, support Minnesota music artists, and promote Minnesota as an attractive and friendly location for Music, Art and Cultural.

This bill will help ensure that Minnesota acknowledges, appreciates, and respects what Hmong and Lao people bring to our state. This bill can assist local artists, dance groups, story tellers, and musicians to share their art with Minnesota. By sharing the culture and heritage of Lao people we are diversifying Minnesota.



Lao traditional, dance costume

Funding this bill will show how Minnesota is putting the heart in the heartland of America.

By investing in Hmong and Lao community, we are investing in the future of Minnesota. We are helping to ensure that Minnesotans throughout the state can learn and grow from the insights this community has to offer.



Hmong traditional, dance costume