

**Date:** April 9, 2025

**To:** Senate Education Finance  
Senator Mary Kunesh, Chair  
Senator Heather Gustafson, Vice Chair  
Senator Jason Rarick, Ranking Minority Member

**From:** Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing

## **Supporting fully accessible language for babies and their families**

The Commission thanks the Senate Education Finance committee leadership for including in the SF2255 DE amendment a small but critical investment towards preventing cognitive harm in deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing babies with the \$150,000-per-year appropriation for the Metro Deaf School Birth-3 Early Learning Program, as laid forth in SF2502. Empowering families with the tools they need to prevent this cognitive harm will reduce the need for costly special education services typically required by children who have experienced this cognitive harm.

The Commission urges committee members to support those provisions, and we continue to appreciate the ways the committee has historically provided for the needs of deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing children. We also appreciate the committee's efforts to minimize the impact of budget reductions on Metro Deaf School's 100% special education student body and on special education students at other public schools.

Signed,



Alicia Lane, *Government Relations Director*