

ÀBÌYÈ COLLECTIVE

March 31, 2025

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Re: Support for SF 1691 – Appropriation for African American-Focused Homeplace

Chair Wicklund and Members of the Committee,

We write to you as birth workers and co-founders of a community-rooted doula practice serving families across the Twin Cities. We are writing in strong support of **SF 1691**, which allocates \$1,000,000 to the Birth Justice Collaborative to strengthen and implement the African American-focused Homeplace model in Hennepin County. This investment is critical to advancing healthy communities and closing the gap in maternal and infant health outcomes.

As doulas, we see firsthand how medical bias and limited access to culturally affirming care harm families during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum. The Homeplace model is intentionally designed to meet these challenges head-on. By centering African American families in a culturally grounded, whole-family approach, the model not only supports birthing people—it uplifts partners, grandparents, and extended kin, recognizing that birth happens within a larger community.

This model reflects what we already know to be true in our work: when African American families are trusted, resourced, and cared for by those who reflect their lived experience, outcomes improve. SF 1691 is more than a funding request; it is a step toward better health and sustainability for generations to come.

We urge your full support of this legislation and welcome any opportunity to speak further about its impact. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to positive maternal and familial outcomes.

With gratitude,



Ade Salami & Dr. Abiola A-B
Co-Founders, ÀBÌYÈ Collective