

March 31, 2025

Re: Support African American-Focused Homeplace

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support the Birth Justice Collaborative and their work in strengthening and implementing the African American-focused Homeplace model in Hennepin County, a vital initiative aimed at improving maternal and child health outcomes. Since 2007, I have been working with Liberty Community Church which is piloting the Homeplace model which will be launched this fall. I know firsthand the positive impact I believe this will have in the State of Minnesota.

African American mothers and families often encounter systemic barriers to accessing quality maternal care, leading to significant disparities in health outcomes. By investing in culturally centered healing and support during pregnancy and the postpartum period, this initiative ensures that more families receive the assistance they require. The Homeplace model delivers essential care and plays a crucial role in addressing racial disparities in maternal and infant health. This model is specifically designed to offer critical care for expecting mothers and support the entire family system throughout the pregnancy experience. It includes programs that engage partners, grandparents, and other family members, ensuring that everyone receives the education, emotional support, and resources necessary for a healthy pregnancy and birth.

Supporting the entire family system is essential, as a collaborative approach strengthens family bonds and creates a nurturing environment for both mother and child. By addressing the broader needs of the family, we can alleviate stress and enhance resilience, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes. This holistic care model will help bridge the gap in maternal health disparities and set a precedent for similar programs throughout the state.

Investing in Homeplace has the potential to create meaningful, lasting change by enhancing access to culturally competent care, fostering better health outcomes, and establishing a precedent for similar programs statewide.

Sincerely,



Lauren Martin, PhD
Associate Professor, University of Minnesota
Mart2114@umn.edu