



Senator Melissa Wiklund
Health and Human Services Committee
Senate Building, 1100
SF1691: African American-Focused Homeplace Appropriation

April 1, 2025

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

The Voices & Choices for Children Coalition is writing to express our strong support for SF1691, a grant to the Birth Justice Collaborative to help implement an African American-focused Homeplace model in Hennepin County, as a vital initiative aimed at improving maternal and child health outcomes. This initiative is vital to accomplishing our vision, to ensure all children of color and American Indian children and their families have the opportunity to thrive and live their fullest lives.

Systemic and geographic barriers continue to prevent communities of color from accessing quality maternal care, leading to significant disparities in health outcomes. 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 offer support for the entire family, throughout the pregnancy experience.

The Homeplace model includes programs that engage the whole community, including grandparents and extended family members, to ensure that everyone receives appropriate education, emotional support, and resources necessary for a healthy pregnancy and birth. 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.

Supporting the entire family is essential to create 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.

We urge you to join us in supporting SF1691 and advocate for its passage to ensure that African American families in Hennepin County receive the care and support they deserve.
In Solidarity,

Voices & Choices for Children Coalition

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