



April 8, 2025

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Health & Human Services Committee
Minnesota Senate Building, 1100
SF 2669 - Health & Human Services Omnibus Bill

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

On behalf of the Prenatal to Three Coalition, thank you for investing in Minnesota's youngest children, their families, caregivers and providers during the pregnancy period, birth, and the earliest years of their lives. Over 80% of the brain is developed by age 3, caregivers and community members are our babies' first teachers. Thank you for investing in the health, care, and wellbeing of Minnesota's future leaders.

Please continue to advocate for these investments included in the Health and Human Services omnibus bill (SF2669):

Medical Assistance Coverage for Birth Services Provided at Home (HF96 / SF1113)

Labor and delivery units have been closing across Greater Minnesota, forcing people to drive hours to receive prenatal care and to give birth. Home birth providers offer personalized care that has shown to produce great outcomes for those who choose to give birth at home. Increasing reimbursement for home birth providers will allow them to care for more people using Medical Assistance.

Children's Mental Health Grant Program Investment

The mental health of infants and toddlers are indicators of their overall health and wellbeing. Their earliest experiences and relationships with their caregivers create the foundation on which all future learning and development is built on. Too many families in Minnesota sit on waitlists for weeks—sometimes months—before they are able to access these critical mental health care for their young children. This investment in the Children's Mental Health Grant Program, more families will be able to access critical support for their young children.

Nutrition Support: Food Shelf Programs & Prepared Food Relief Grants

Nutrition for babies, pregnant people, caregivers and families is vital for healthy development, disease prevention, and a child's overall well-being. Early nutrition has long-term impacts on

the health and development of children, having reliable access to nutritious food is a critical part to a child's long-term health and wellbeing. Food Shelf Programs and Prepared Food Relief Grants help more children, pregnant and breastfeeding women access the healthy food needed to support the long-term health and wellbeing of all family members.

Thank you,

Alisha Porter,
Children's Defense Funds-MN, State Director
MN Prenatal to Three Coalition, Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
Retired Early Childhood Advisor,
MN Prenatal to Three Coalition, Co-Chair

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn,
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Alexandra Fitzsimmons,
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