youthprise

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Minnesota Senate Higher Education Committee
95 University Ave W
Saint Paul, MN 55155

February 26, 2025

RE: Letter of Support for SF 1474 – Direct Admissions Expansion

Dear Senator Higher Education Committee members,

On behalf of Youthprise, I am writing to express our strong support for SF 1474, the Direct Admissions Expansion bill. This initiative is a critical step in ensuring more Minnesota students—especially those who may not see college as an attainable goal—have a clear and accessible pathway to higher education.

Since its launch in 2022-23, Direct Admissions has demonstrated early success in increasing college enrollment, FAFSA completion rates, and overall access to postsecondary education. By using high school course data to automatically admit students to Minnesota's technical schools, tribal colleges, community colleges, and four-year universities, the program removes unnecessary barriers and empowers students to see themselves as college-bound.

The impact is clear:

- FAFSA completion at participating high schools increased from 50% to 58% in just one year.
- College enrollment among recent graduates rose from 31% to 33%.
- These improvements were seen across demographics, benefiting low-income students and students of color.
- The program is rapidly expanding, with 55 colleges and universities and 120 high schools already participating.

At Youthprise, we believe in investing in initiatives that create equitable access to education and career pathways. Direct Admissions is a cost-effective, high-impact strategy that bridges the gap between K-12 and higher education, ensuring that students who might otherwise fall through the cracks are given a clear path forward.

We urge you to support SF 1474 and ensure that this simple but powerful intervention becomes a universal practice across Minnesota. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to expanding educational opportunities for all students.

Sincerely,

Erin Martin
Director of Policy & System Transformation Programs
Youthprise