

DiversityCouncil

February 22, 2018

State of Minnesota
House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights budget proposal currently before you for consideration. While there are many critical funding needs vying for limited State dollars, those being addressed under the MDHR Transformational Budget proposal are fundamental to advancing equity across the state.

The expansion of MDHR services through the addition of regional offices has been discussed for a number of years. It is a recommendation brought forward to the governor in the MN Equity Blueprint, a citizen-crafted plan for equitable growth, and was championed by former MDHR commissioner Kevin Lindsey. The department made tremendous advancements in recent years, a trajectory that must be maintained. It is imperative that the State acknowledge and fund the growth necessary for Commissioner Lucero to keep to that path.

Additionally, funding for the expansion of MDHR services is absolutely vital for both the wellbeing of all who call Minnesota home and for the economic future of the state. There are workforce challenges in all 87 Minnesota counties, emphasizing the need to ensure that every individual is employed to their full potential and that all have access to the housing, education, sustenance, and mobility to fully engage. MDHR is key to this vision. Our changing demographics – in age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, and gender identity – make oversight and accountability more pressing than ever.

Please find your way to supporting this budget. We have an opportunity to build on a solid foundation and grow into adequate support for one of the most basic and most important aspects of government: protection and advancement of human rights.

Sincerely,



Dee Sabol, Executive Director
The Diversity Council
www.diversitycouncil.org