



Filipinx for Immigrant Rights & Racial Justice Minnesota
Makibaka, Mag-alsa, Para sa Hustisya!

I am writing this letter to give my strong support for the companion bills HF 4611 and SF 4540, which would create a community relief grant program to support the thousands of immigrant Minnesotans who fall through the gaps deliberately written into federal stimulus grants, unemployment insurance, and other relief programs. In the Filipinx community, we are aware of numerous individuals who have worked and paid taxes in Minnesota for many years, but who do not have a Social Security Number and now find themselves worried about being evicted and feeding their families.

As the son of an immigrant with many family members of mixed immigration status, I truly appreciate the vital role in our state's culture and economy that is played by our Minnesotan immigrant population. And while we often focus on the undocumented, this also includes asylees, people here on work and family visas, and foreign students. Not only are these new arrivals crucial for our state to build its workforce of the future, they play a disproportionately crucial role in many frontline industries including food processing, food service, and health care. Immigrants from the Philippines, in particular, are disproportionately nurses and doctors, meaning they are brought in through special visa programs specifically meant to bolster our health care system. It is unfair that they are asked to fend for themselves at this time when they have been brought here to take care of others. Quite simply, without our immigrant neighbors, Minnesotans would not enjoy the food supply or health care system we take for granted. And it is only fair that our state government support them when our federal government is blatantly and cruelly turning its back on immigrants.

In this, Asian History Month, it is the perfect time to honor the contributions of our immigrant population by passing HF 4611 immediately.

Sincerely,

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