

April 10, 2018

Representative Dave Pinto
321 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Pinto,

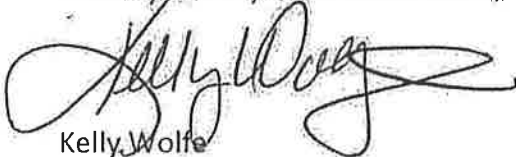
On behalf of Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, I am writing to express our support for House File 3574 / SF 3307, a bill to expand health disparities grants to address gaps in prenatal care.

Children's Minnesota is the state's largest pediatric provider. We see children from all 87 counties and 60% of the counties in our surrounding states. We have the region's largest neonatal care program caring for approximately 2,000 babies in our neonatal intensive care unit each year.

According to the Minnesota Department of Health Study on Infant Mortality, American Indians and African-Americans have higher rates of infant mortality than any other racial and ethnic groups. In fact, American Indians have almost three times the post-neonatal deaths as whites do. These inequities start before birth: women of color and American Indian women receive prenatal care at much lower rates than do white women in Minnesota due to lack of access, affordability, or lack of culturally appropriate services and interventions. Inadequate prenatal care has been linked to poorer health outcomes for babies and later struggles with academic success.

At Children's Minnesota, our vision is to be "every family's essential partner in raising healthier children." We believe that every child deserves a chance for a healthy start in life. We strongly support House File 3574 as a tool to help us address the health disparities that have persisted in our communities of color for far too long. We must invest early and through partnership with parents if we want to guarantee that everyone is afforded an equitable chance at birth and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration,



Kelly Wolfe
Director of Public Affairs and Advocacy
Children's Minnesota