



CULTURAL DIVERSITY RESOURCES
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March 16, 2021

Rep. Mohamud Noor, Chair
Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota State Legislature

RE: Support for [HF2019](#) - Nonprofit Infrastructure Grant Program (NIGP)

Dear Chair Noor, Representative Heather Keeler and Senator Amy Klobuchar

I am Yoke -Sim Gunaratne, Executive Director of Cultural Diversity Resources' nonprofit serving low-income and ethnically diverse population in Clay County, MN. As your constituent, I am writing to support HF2019 which is being heard in the Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy Committee on Wednesday, March 17th. This bill would appropriate funding to Propel Nonprofits for the purpose of regranting to small nonprofit organizations serving historically underserved communities. As nonprofits we have struggled with the impact of COVID-19. Our communities need us more than ever as we seek to recover from the devastating and disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on BIPOC communities.

My organization benefited from a grant from Propel Nonprofits in 2017. This funding has helped us build the infrastructure and program capacity to serve the community. This investment was especially valuable to us as we adapted our organization and programs to respond to the demands brought about by the public health crisis of COVID-19. The funding is vital for our nonprofit to focus on antipoverty programs on employment, financial literacy, self-sufficiency referrals, bilingual interpreting, after-school tutoring, and youth activities to empower low-income BIPOC communities to adjust and recover from racial and economic inequities amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

Beyond the funding, Propel provided us additional technical assistance which has helped us strengthen our capacity. Without the NIGP we would have a challenging time accessing this kind of funding despite the important services that we are providing for our community.

For the above reasons, I ask that you support HF2019. Investment in the nonprofit sector is important because we provide essential services in our communities and partner with the public and private sector. I would be happy to share more about our story. You may contact me at (701) 212-5874. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Yoke-Sim Gunaratne
Executive Director