



Dear Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

We write to you today with strong support for the many provisions in the SF4410 DE/HHS Omnibus bill that improve the lives of our state's children, especially those facing the largest opportunity gaps. We lift up just a few specific provisions, among many:

Stabilizing Working Minnesotans changes that reduce cliff effects and inconsistencies that make it challenging for families to achieve economic stability and help families build a solid economic base from which they and their children can launch. These include the following MFIP changes:

- **6-month reporting, prospective budgeting & simplification** to provide predictability in budgeting and improve economic stability for the 56,000 children on the program
- **Aligning RSDI and SSI income disregards.**

Permanent investments in Community Solutions for Healthy Child Development Grant Program and its proven strategy for addressing disparities by amplifying innovative solutions that leverage community assets, are culturally relevant, and center the experiences and dignity of impacted people and communities.

- Due to limited funding, the vast majority of the current 23 **great ideas included in the program did not receive full funding**, compromising their potential. Furthermore, **too many promising proposals that harness the power and knowledge within communities were left behind.**
- Without legislative action the **program will end in 2023, jeopardizing the important progress being made** in communities across the state and as well as the innovative process that involves and uplifts communities of color, American Indian communities, and geographically dispersed communities while highlighting their invaluable knowledge.

New state investments that set up more of our youngest Minnesotans for success, among them: **Child care assistance** provider rates, expanded family definition and waitlist changes; grants to **family, friend and neighbor caregivers**; and expanded **home visiting**.

A multi-pronged approach to the mental health crisis among children and the adults in their lives. With a quarter of 9th graders reported a long-term mental health, behavioral or emotional problem even before the pandemic, the time is now for significant resources and a full court press.

The Omnibus bill also include many other critical provisions, such as: **Continuous 12-month MA coverage for children**; an **increase in the SNAP gross income limit**; investments in **community resource hubs** and the **Healthy Beginnings, Healthy Families act**.

We know these provisions and others included SF4410/HHS Omnibus are critical to the future of our children and our state. Thank you for prioritizing them.

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