



*An Initiative of Minnesota Alliance With Youth*

Dear Senator Clausen,

Thank you for attending the Minnesota Youth Council Committee meeting held April 20, 2018, and for detailing SF 1691. The committee voted unanimously to support your legislation to appropriate funds toward supporting homeless youth with 16 votes in the affirmative and zero votes in the negative

We wish to commend you on your specific and well researched bill. We were able to identify minimal loopholes and were appreciative of your well-supported statements. In future presentations, however, we encourage you to be more direct in your statements regarding populations of homeless youth and their intersections of youth with disabilities. Additionally, we urge you to be direct and confident in your answers. Often, we felt that your answers did not fully address the questions posed.

While we supported the overall theme and idea of the bill, we were weary of certain elements. One of the largest issues raised in our discussion of this bill was that it only supported the education of homeless children. While this is a very important factor in a young child's development, housing and external support can be vital in the first 5 years of a child's life. We were also very curious to know how this program fits into the larger network of supporting homeless youth. What programs become available to these children as they reach the elementary age? The last concern of the committee can be found in Section 2 and Section 3 of the bill (lines 2.21-3.19). These lines address the *System Redesign; Homeless Children Supports* and we felt that it was unclear to where the requested monetary amount would be going. Reading further into the bill, it appears that the appropriation would be for the redesign of this program, and that this money would not go directly to the education of young children receiving this support.

All of these factors in consideration, there were many elements of your bill that we felt effectively addressed a prevalent issue. We appreciated the fact that your bill performs proactively and addresses the lack of support for homeless youth. Furthermore, we found your bill instrumental in supporting the needs of developing children and admire the fact that it fosters the wholistic wellness of families. Not only this, but we welcome the automatic qualification into these programs.

Thank you for taking the time to present this bill to the Minnesota Youth Council Committee. We appreciate your support in addressing the pressing matter of homeless youth. We look forward to hearing more on this bill and continuing to support it.

Sincerely,

The Minnesota Youth Council Committee