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Dear Representative Bly,

Thank you for presenting HF 276, regarding additional support for homeless students, during the Minnesota Youth Council Committee meeting on March 21st, 2017. The MYCC appreciates your willingness to present your bill to the Committee. The bill was voted on and passed with 17 votes in the affirmative and 0 votes in the negative.

There are many positive aspects that allowed the Committee to vote unanimously in favor of this bill. As youth, we are grateful for the awareness and support that this bill provides for those affected by homelessness. The MYCC conducted a survey earlier this year and found that this is an issue a large majority of the 350 participants care about. We appreciate that this bill does not just provide basic needs to homeless students, but it provides emotional and social support as well. This bill focuses on equity for all students and provides charter schools and ALC's with the necessary resources for them to meet the requirements of the federal law. The fact that this bill is not forced upon all homeless students at these schools is also a benefit, as it takes into consideration the feelings of those who are impacted. We are also esteemed about your passion for this bill, along with that of the testifier you had with you. Ms. Dahl's remarks and answers to our questions proved beneficial in understanding the bill and the impact that it truly can have.

The MYCC has a few recommendations to further improve the bill. We would love for the bill to be clearer when it comes to students who are homeless not being alienated when provided with the support coming from this bill. Furthermore, we hope you would consider expanding professional development to include voices of students that have, or are currently, experiencing homelessness. There is nobody better to listen to than someone who has gone through this. It would be interesting to know how other states have handled this problem, which could better help us understand the best solution to the issue.

We are hopeful that this bill will have a strong impact on the issue of homelessness, especially on those students dealing with the negative impacts of it each and every day. It is essential to continue this conversation, and work towards the equity of all students. We hope our feedback is valuable to the future of this bill.

Sincerely,

Minnesota Youth Council Committee



An Initiative of Minnesota Alliance With Youth