



February 24, 2022

Chair Paul Marquart
House Taxes Committee
Re: HF 3669 (Marquart)

Chair Marquart and Members,

The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage offers the following statement on the Governor's Tax Bill (HF 3669, Marquart) and the broader economic expansion plan of which it is part.

We stand in strong support of the goals of investing in education opportunity, workforce development, and relief measures for businesses and families. In particular, we commend the following tax credit provisions in Article 2 of HF 3669, which will help all Minnesota children and families, including African heritage children and families:

- **Expansion of Child and Dependent Care Credit** – This measure will make 20,900 more households eligible for the credit. The temporary increase in maximum credit amount will reduce taxes by \$161 on average for 51,000 tax returns in year 2022.
- **Working Family Credit Expansion for ITINs** – This measure allows individuals who use an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number to qualify for Working Family Credit.
- **Expansion of K-12 Education Credit** – Among the provisions here is an increase of the income threshold from \$33,500 to \$70,000. The expansion will enable 38,600 more households to be eligible for this education credit.

Our Council believes that the economic security of African heritage constituents can be served by policies that reinvest a portion of the economic contributions of our constituents back into the economic growth structures of their communities. This means dedicating some of the annual output of businesses and workers that self-identify as African descent (Africans and African Americans) to help grow and sustain the cultural, entrepreneurial, and organizational resource capacities within these communities, particularly in areas burdened by high poverty and underinvestment.

We recommend that your committee seek legislation that would incentivize local public and private investments in the economic needs of Minnesotans of African heritage as a protected class within our civil rights laws. Such legislation would include government revenue and tax relief strategies that increase direct access of African heritage constituents to finance capital and technical assistance for community and organization-building enterprises, equitable development and home ownership, and knowledge and skills development for high-wage and high-demand new economy jobs.

Thank you for considering this request. We look forward to working with your committee on these budget and tax issues.

Sincerely,

Linda Sloan | Executive Director
Theodore Rose | Legislative and Policy Director
Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage

The Minnesota Legislature empowered the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of the State of Minnesota. Generally, the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- *Advising the Governor and the Legislature on issues confronting People of African Heritage;*
- *Advising the Governor and the Legislature on statutes, rules, and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota;*
- *Serving as a liaison to the federal government, local government units and private organizations on matters relating to People of African Heritage in Minnesota;*
- *Implementing programs designed to solve problems of People of African Heritage when authorized by statute, rule or order; and*
- *Publicizing the accomplishments of People of African Heritage and their contributions to the state.*