Start Early
Funders Coalition

Senator Melissa Wicklund
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
2107 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 16th, 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Start Early Funders Coalition, we are writing in support of SF4388 to create a grant funded program to support the delivery of early childhood mental health care. In particular, we are pleased to see the inclusion of a broad range of providers to ensure access across the State, in particular in more rural communities where many individuals lack access to any mental health services. The inclusion of providing consultation directly to child care providers is a proven way of addressing mental health in early childhood.

Early childhood is a critical time to impact immediate and long-term health and educational outcomes. During this unique period of significant brain development and growth, the most effective and impactful ways we can impact the long-term success of our children is to support their development. Early childhood mental health services are both critical for families, and scarce. Families have difficulty finding providers that serve this particular age group, when early intervention would be most impactful. By addressing mental health needs at an early stage, we can prevent long-term consequences and promote healthier outcomes for children and families.

Our vision as a Coalition is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success. Our coalition is committed to supporting policies that will benefit low-income, rural and Black, Indigenous and children of color and their families; and the programs that serve them.

Sincerely,
Allison Corrado,
Start Early Funders Coalition
Public Policy Committee Chair