

4/13/2018

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jacob Schimetz, and I am a student at St. Olaf College and I am an alumni of the Minnesota Youth Council. First, I want to thank you for holding a hearing on SF 1579 granting funds to the Minnesota Youth Council. This will go a long way to ensure that this unique program continues to thrive.

I served on the Minnesota Youth Council's policy committee for two years, one as a member and the other as a co-chair. In those influential two years, I learned a lot and I also grew as a person. Serving on the Committee introduced me to fellow students from around the state that I know are going to be lifelong friends. I grew as a leader, having to speak in front of not just my peers, but audiences and legislators, such as yourselves.

I like to tell people that my experience on the Minnesota Youth Council was special in that I was emboldened. To me, there is a striking difference between emboldening and enabling. To enable is to give one the means or the ability to do something, but to embolden is to encourage one and give them the drive to do something. Through my MYC experiences, I was emboldened to use my voice, to say something, and to realize that what I have to say matters. This is not unique to me. This emboldening is felt throughout the members of the Minnesota Youth Council, both past and present, and through young people that we interact with across the state.

I hope that we can all agree that it is important to bring those to the table who are impacted by an issue, which is why it is so important to support the Minnesota Youth Council. When the Legislature created the Minnesota Youth Council Committee in 2013, this program was one of the first of its kind - bringing youth from across the state to the Capitol to be heard and to be involved in the process. This Committee brings together youth from all corners of Minnesota, from Northfield and Mora, to Duluth and Rochester. However, especially for many members of the Committee, a trip to the Twin Cities can be costly. Paying for gas and lodging for multiple meetings a year adds up. This is why it is crucial to fund the Minnesota Youth Council. We need to ensure that all voices can be brought to the table, no matter their background, financial situation, or location.

Thank you for your consideration of SF 1579. I hope that we can work together to ensure that the Minnesota Youth Council continues to thrive.

Sincerely,

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