



March 29, 2022

Dear Members of the Senate Jobs and Economic Growth Finance and Policy Committee,

We write in support of funding to provide critical relief for nonprofit organizations delivering essential services that strengthen community recovery and economic vitality across the state. Following two years of unprecedented financial strain on the nonprofit sector due to the pandemic, we ask that these investments be increased from the Governor's proposal of \$50 million, to **Senator Nelson's proposed \$200 million Nonprofit Relief Fund per Senate File 3593.**

At Greater Twin Cities United Way, our mission is to unite changemakers, advocate for social good and develop solutions to address the challenges no one can solve alone. Together with our partners, we touched over 500,000 lives across the nine-county metro area last year. We fund over 100 nonprofits and coalitions through multi-year general operations grants, innovation initiatives and supportive funds directed toward our partners' most pressing needs in the areas of Household Stability, Educational Success and Economic Opportunity.

Nonprofit organizations are the first line of community support and play a critical role connecting people to supportive programs to get them back on their feet following hardship or a crisis. And we know these needs have grown. **United Way's 211 resource helpline, which connects people to resources like housing assistance and food, received over 276,000 resource requests by Minnesotans in 2021, representing a 35% increase compared to 2020.**

An important part of our economy, nonprofits employ 14% of our state's workforce and are well-positioned to address local needs and priorities, especially in response to the pandemic. However, many nonprofits – who already operate on thin margins – had to cut budgets, hours and programming to continue operating, even with the support of their philanthropic partners. Funding shortfalls paired with an increased need for services has made it increasingly difficult for these organizations to continue operating at the level our communities need to create stability while working to rebuild.

To continue providing the support communities need during COVID-19 and to accelerate our recovery, Minnesota needs essential services and job creation. Establishing a \$200 million nonprofit relief fund would provide critical investments to support a more equitable recovery, sustain thriving communities and promote a strong state economy.

Sincerely,

Kristen Rosenberger
Director, Advocacy & External Engagement
Greater Twin Cities United Way