



MEDIA ADVISORY

Legislation to Strengthen Economic Security of Working Families is a Priority for Lawmakers

February 12, 2013

ST. PAUL, MINN— State Representative Melissa Hortman (36B-DFL) and State Senator David Tomassoni (6-DFL) are carrying legislation to strengthen the economic security of Minnesota families. The Family Economic Security (FES) Act (HF 430, SF xxx) improves access to childcare for more working families, increases the minimum wage to \$9.50 and enhances family-friendly tax credits.

Rep. Hortman and Sen. Tomassoni will be joined at a press conference by co-authors and staff from Child Care WORKS, Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota, JOBS NOW Coalition and the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition to discuss how the three policies in the FES Act will increase family income, decrease poverty and enhance child wellbeing.

Press Conference:

Wednesday, February 13, 2013

10:00 a.m.

State Office Building, Room 181

**100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55155**

As the wages of low- and middle-income working Minnesotans continue to stagnate, the cost of housing, utilities, food, childcare, transportation and health care continue to increase. It costs a family of three (one adult and two children) approximately \$46,000 a year to meet basic needs. Yet, a parent working full-time earning the federal minimum wage has a gross income of only \$15,080, leaving a family of three at only 77% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.* Worse yet, workers covered only by Minnesota's minimum wage earn less than \$13,000 a year – an income that leaves a family of three at 65% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.*

The economic security of a family is critical to the health and wellbeing of its children and the future prosperity of Minnesota. Children from families with sufficient financial resources are far more likely than children from economically disadvantaged families to start kindergarten ready to succeed, flourish in school and be more productive later in life. The three policy initiatives in the FES Act were central to the research and recommendations made by the bi-partisan Legislative Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020.

Joining Rep. Hortman as House co-authors are Majority Leader Erin Murphy, Rep. Carlos Mariani, Rep. Lyndon Carlson, Rep. Ann Lenczewski, Rep. Tina Liebling, Rep. Sheldon Johnson, Rep. Tim Mahoney, Rep. Patti Fritz, Rep. Joe Atkins and Rep. Ryan Winkler. Joining Sen. Tomassoni as Senate co-authors are Sen. John Marty, Sen. Richard Cohen, Sen. Kent Eken and Sen. Jeff Hayden.

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*To be considered living in poverty, a family must earn less than 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, which for a family of three is \$19,090 per year.

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