JEWISH COMMUNITY ACTION

April 3, 2025

Dear Chair Klevorn and members of the State Government Finance & Policy Committee,

On behalf of the members of Jewish Community Action, I am writing in support of the Minnesota Equal Rights Amendment, HF 501. JCA has been organizing the Minnesota Jewish Community for justice for 30 years.

Our faith teaches us that every human being has the spark of the divine, and is worthy of kavod habriyot, human dignity. Our community wholeheartedly supports a Minnesota Equal Rights Amendment that protects the dignity and rights of every Minnesotan, not only today and tomorrow, but for generations to come.

As people of faith, we have been horrified by some of the most significant attacks on bodily autonomy and self-determination we have ever seen. Wielding religion as a cudgel of hate with a goal of denying Minnesotans freedom and equality under the law is unamerican, un-Minnesotan, and absolutely contrary to the values of dignity and inclusion that our faith teaches us, and to the values of so many people of many faiths across our state.

We urge this committee — and this legislature — to empower Minnesotans to enshrine in our state constitution the most inclusive possible Equal Rights Amendment.

The Minnesota ERA would offer everyone the strongest possible protections against discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, or sex — including pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation — no matter who's in power in state government.

This ERA has widespread support from individuals across Minnesota, and the backing of labor, health, legal, reproductive justice, LGBTQ+, and philanthropic organizations.

There are few clearer reflections of our values as Minnesotans than our state Constitution, and it is the civic right and responsibility of the people of our state to amend it as needed to ensure that it reflects our values as fully and clearly as possible.

Thank you.

Beth Gendler, Executive Director
Jewish Community Action