GRINDLINE
SKATEPARKS

Date 5/19/2022

The Honorable

Minnesota State Senate

St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

Dear Senators Bakk, Senjem, and Pappas,

I am writing today to encourage you to support skateboarding and other wheeled sports with the creation of more skateparks in Minnesota by passing skatepark grant program bill HF2876/SF2502. Much more than a sport or an activity, skateboarding is a community that now includes more than 9-million youth in the United States. While its many benefits were intuitive to me and the skaters of my generation; today we have research to prove what we already knew—that skateboarding provides a healthy, physical outlet, and a community of peers who embrace and support one another. With Grindline Skateparks, Inc. we have personally witnessed that skateparks build and sustain healthy communities.

The National Centers for Disease Control have reported that the obesity rate among children has doubled in the past thirty years. The CDC also shows that suicide among teens and young adults has grown by over 50% in the past decade. More recently, researchers at the University of Southern California have made a direct connection between skateboarding and positive mental health outcomes. They've also shown that skateboarding directly relieves the type of stress that leads to depression and suicide ideation among teens. One way for those of us in leadership roles to address these issues affecting our youth is to increase access to skateboarding and other wheeled sports. Local communities have rallied to create public skateboard parks where their youth can safely gather, participate, and build those important social bonds. We encourage State and National leaders to support these local efforts to increase opportunities for youth to skate and enjoy its many benefits by building more skateparks in Minnesota.

As a gathering place for dedicated and athletic youth, the skatepark provides the forum for visitors young and old, with varying skill levels, to meet and share experiences. For many skateboarding youths, the skatepark becomes a home-away-from-home. More than anyone, young people need to feel like they are recognized and appreciated by their communities. In too many places, skateboarders get the wrong message from local authorities, who limit or outlaw skateboarding and ignore its inherent benefits. Skateparks are the solution. Every skatepark supports hundreds of kids that might otherwise have nowhere to go. If Grindline Skateparks, Inc. can be a resource as you consider ways to support skateboarding and the creation of skateboard parks in Minnesota, we would be pleased to assist however we can.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Kyle Little

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