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**Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Statement for the Record**

***Supporting Twin Cities Public Television's "Believe in Black Youth" Programming
October 9, 2015***

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Twin Cities Public Television's efforts through the American Graduate initiative to provide Minnesota's African American youth with a platform to share their educational journeys, challenges, and success stories with our community.

American Graduate is a multi-year public media initiative through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting that aids local communities across America in finding solutions to the high school dropout crisis that plagues our nation.

I am proud that in Minnesota, Twin Cities Public Television's contribution to this national effort has been to explore not only the state's achievement gap in our African American community, but also the belief gap that fuels it. There is often a significant division in belief between what children and families of traditionally marginalized groups believe they can accomplish and what others in positions of power believe these youth are capable of. TPT's effort is aimed at exposing these barriers to success and providing youth with an opportunity to share their stories.

TPT's American Graduate supported programming is called "Believe in Black Youth," which includes segments on "Almanac", TPT's weekly public affairs program, online spots and much more. The cornerstone of TPT's efforts is a thirty minute documentary titled "Black Brilliance" which chronicles the journeys of five African American high school students to graduation and their dreams for the future. It is through stories like those told in "Black Brilliance" that TPT seeks to help change the narrative of a belief system about Minnesota's marginalized African American youth from one of inadequacy and disadvantage to one of value and worth.

Every student in America deserves the opportunity to receive a quality education, and ensuring that all of our nation's children have the best chance for success in life is the most important job we have as leaders, teachers, parents, and Americans. I am truly pleased to see Twin Cities Public Television address these critical issues and advancing the voices of those in our community who have found it so difficult to have their voices heard.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.