

March 20th, 2023

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

Please accept this letter of support for SF1638 - A bill for an act relating to children; appropriating money for the Quality Parenting Initiative.

Family Alternatives has been a founding member of Quality Parenting Initiative – Minnesota (QPI-MN) since it's planning stages in 2016. Our agency's mission is to support **relationships and enhances environments that embrace youth and families in transition. Our commitment to Quality Parenting Initiative is a direct way in which we are live out this mission.**

Embedded into all QPI practices is leveraging the power of relationships and wisdom of those who have experienced the system firsthand. Our organization has sent six (three staff, three foster parents) through the QPI Champions training to do our part in advocating for children and families in our communities. This has increased our collaborative relationships with partners in the foster care system and we have provided supportive adult leadership to the QPI-MN Youth-led education presentations and materials for foster parents and child welfare professionals with the youth-driven goal that foster homes can become safer, healthier, and a more loving environment.

We know the impact QPI practices has on children who are in foster care where excellent parenting is the focus – they can maintain the relationships with foster parents after reunification. Our foster families have become an extension of family for the child – and their parents.

Consistent excellent parenting and meaningful relationships are the most important services we can provide to children and youth in foster care, ultimately promoting timely reunification and reducing reentry. House File 1672 is a small investment for the state that will yield a significant impact for our children, families, and communities. This proposal ensures the necessary technical assistance will be sustainable and lead to fundamental changes that ultimately promote timely reunification and reduce reentry.

Thank you so much,



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Mary Lennick, LICSW  
Executive Director