



Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota

P.O. Box 308 • 39527 Reservation Highway 1

Morton, MN 56270

Cansayapi Otunwe

April 10, 2024

Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, Chair
Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
Sent via email (Ella.Schultz@house.mn.gov)

Re: Support for H.F. 4838

Hau Chair Becker-Finn and members of the Committee,

Preservation of ICWA and strengthening of MIFPA is of ongoing and critical importance for the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota ("Community").

Prior to the passage of ICWA in 1978, Indian children were placed in foster care and adoptive homes at a rate nineteen (19) times higher than non-Indian children, and in some states, eighty-five (85%) of all Indian children were placed in non-Indian homes. In 2020, Indian children in our state were 16.4 percent (16.4%) more likely than white children to be placed out-of-home.

The Community understands that the MIFPA workgroup involved key stakeholders affected by this legislation, including but not limited to participation from Minnesota County Attorneys Association, Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Association of Minnesota Counties, County Social Service Directors, representatives from various tribes, parents attorneys', the Minnesota State Bar Association Section for Family and Probate - over 180 individuals were invited to participate in the revision process.

House File 4838 amends MIFPA to further compliance, clarify and deconflict statutory language, strengthen existing provisions, clarify the role of foster parents

in MIFPA proceedings, and provide remedies and consequences in cases in which invalidation occurs. It also address the needs of families subject to child protection proceedings, especially children faced with permanency.

The Community fully supports the amendments as provided in House File 4838 and appreciates passage of this bill to ensure MIFPA is strengthened and better serves the needs of Indian children and families.

The Community thanks you, Chair Becker-Finn, for authoring this legislation. The Community is also appreciative of the Committee's support of the Phase I MIFPA amendment during the last legislative session and ask for your support for the amendment as found in House File 4838.

Pidamaya-do,



Robert L. Larsen
President
Lower Sioux Indian Community