



Family Preservation Subcommittee

Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Family Preservation Subcommittee

April 12, 2024

Dear Legislators,

The Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors (MUID) Family Preservation Subcommittee strongly supports SF 4480/HF 4838, which expands the protections of the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA). The MUID group promotes the wellbeing, growth, and mutual interests of Minnesota's urban American Indian organizations. The Family Preservation Subcommittee addresses family preservation issues relating to American Indian families, including the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act.

Many of the families we work with have been negatively impacted by federal policies, boarding schools, and the unjustifiable removals from their communities and cultures. The proposed amendments in the MIFPA bill will increase protections for the families we work with. In particular, appointing counsel prior to the first hearing on the petition will ensure that parents understand their rights and have an advocate from the beginning of the court process.

These amendments will benefit the families in our community as well as Indian families throughout the state. While this is a tribally led bill, the MIFPA workgroup has engaged with various other stakeholders, including community partners, community organizations, the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators, the Minnesota County Attorneys Association, and the Association of Minnesota Counties.

Thank you for considering this legislation and supporting the continuing efforts to improve the wellbeing of our American Indian families.

Sincerely,

Laura Newton, Chair
MUID Family Preservation Subcommittee