



SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION

GOVERNMENT CENTER WEST • HHS MANAGEMENT & ADMIN SERVICES

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Director

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Dear Legislative Committee Members:

On behalf of Scott County Health and Human Services, I want to convey our strong support for SF942 being heard in your committee. This bill supports community driven services to address situations where children are deemed to be habitually truant and provides flexibility for counties seeking to utilize a community provider to address the underlying causes of truancy within a family.

Currently, counties and the county child welfare agency are limited in their response options when providing a child welfare response. This bill changes the statute to allow a county to provide a response to a truancy or educational neglect report using a community-based organization or other community partner to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate responses to meet the needs of the family.

Understanding the underlying challenges within a family that lead to school absenteeism/truancy takes time and trust. Families are often frightened of the child protective system, which can impact the ability to uncover the root causes contributing to school absences. Providing a means to serve the family through a community led organization or partner widens the pool of available supports to the family – and can often result in the formation of a lasting and wrap around support mechanism that the family can work with and rely on for other needs as well.

Scott County supports this bill and its focus on accessibility and supportive resources for children and families in Minnesota.

We urge this committee to pass this bill to best support Minnesota's children.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Arntson, MSW
Deputy Director, Scott County Health & Human Services

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