



March 6, 2025

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Service Committee,

As an organization committed to the well-being and empowerment of families for fifty years, Families Rising is writing to express our strong support for SF 1786 and to urge your favorable consideration of this important legislation.

Families Rising is a Minnesota-based non-profit that serves foster, adoptive, and kinship families throughout the United States and Canada. Our mission is to amplify those with lived experience, assist adoptive, foster, and kinship parents, educate child welfare professionals, and champion the well-being of children and families.

We support this legislation to provide for a little more flexibility in licensing requirements for relatives who step up to care for their kin in the foster care system. We know that maintaining family connections is important to the wellbeing of children and youth in the foster care system, and that being placed with a family member or trusted adult they have an existing relationship with leads to better outcomes for kids. We believe these changes will help with the licensing of relative caregivers while still maintaining the important requirements that non relative foster families must meet. We believe these changes will also reduce the number of placements that the children and youth will face by quickly moving them to family and staying connected to their kin and community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We encourage you to support the passage of Senate File 1786.

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Sincerely,
Ligia Cushman
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Ligia N. Cushman, MA
Chief Executive Officer

