



March 3rd, 2025

RE: Letter of Support for SF 1786 – Kinship Licensing and Support for Relative-Kin Caregivers

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

On behalf of Nexus Family Healing, we write to express our strong support for SF 1786, which seeks to improve the licensing process and support for Minnesota's relative-kin caregivers. As an organization dedicated to providing healing and stability for children and families, we recognize the critical role that relative-kin caregivers play in our foster care system and the need for systemic updates to better serve these families.

Relative-kin caregivers in Minnesota face unnecessary barriers. A 2024 survey by the Quality Parenting Initiative-MN revealed that the current licensing process presents significant obstacles and delays, making it difficult for families to navigate the system efficiently. Encouragingly, new federal flexibilities announced by the Children's Bureau in 2023 allow states to create a Kinship Licensing Standard that can streamline these processes and improve support for relative-kin caregivers. As one recently licensed relative caregiver stated, "The most complicated part about foster care is not the difficulty of upending my life to care for my relatives – it is dealing with your licensing paperwork."

We strongly urge your support for SF 1786 to create a more equitable and effective foster care system that prioritizes family connections and stability. By reducing barriers and enhancing support for relative-kin caregivers, we can ensure that children in Minnesota receive the care, consistency, and love they deserve.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to the well-being of Minnesota's children and families. We appreciate your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Margaret Vimont'.

Margaret Vimont
Chief Growth Officer