



Foster Adopt Minnesota

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share our organization's support for SF 1548. Foster Adopt Minnesota is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to serving adoptive, foster and kinship families across the state of Minnesota. Our services support this community through all stages of their journeys helping them connect to education, resources, support services, routes for advocacy, and navigating systems throughout their experiences.

If passed, SF 1548 would positively impact families who have finalized an adoption or a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody of a child under the age of six. Every day our staff works directly with this population and sees first-hand the need for Northstar Care for Children Benefits to be consistent for families whether permanency is achieved before or after the age of six.

- Children who have experienced early complex trauma, substance exposure, separation from first caregivers, attachment disruptions, etc. are impacted for the short and long term no matter the age that permanency is reached.
- Being placed with kin is a powerful mitigating factor for a child's well-being and is an essential goal and best practice for children in need of permanency.
- Supporting consistent Northstar benefits for these kinship families who are stepping up and into the long-term commitment of caring for their young loved ones will decrease delays in permanency planning and help stabilize supports, services, and care for children and their families for the short and long term.
- The passage of SF 1548 would especially have a positive impact on kinship families who have lower incomes, including older caregivers on limited incomes.

Foster Adopt Minnesota appreciates the attention given to making these changes to The Northstar Care for Children Act and urges the members of the committee to support the passage of SF 1548.

Regards,

Rachel Walstad
Executive Director
[Foster Adopt Minnesota](http://FosterAdoptMN.org)

