



February 25, 2025

Re: SF1548/HF1276

Support for Modification to Northstar Care for Children Benefits for Children Under the Age of Six

Dear Legislators:

The Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors (MUID) group strongly supports the modification to the Northstar Care for Children Pre-School Entry Alternate Rate for children who reach permanency with relatives or within the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA) placement preferences. MUID promotes the wellbeing, growth, and mutual interests of Minnesota's urban American Indian organizations.

Under the Northstar Care for Children program foster children who reach permanency while under the age of 6 receive approximately 50% of the financial support older children receive. This alternate rate negatively impacts younger children in the foster care system by creating financial barriers for their relative care providers.

This is particularly important in cases involving American Indian children, who are at greater risk of child protection involvement. As of 2022, American Indian children are sixteen times more likely than white children to be in out-of-home care. This disproportionately high rate does not allow for American Indian children to foster their familial, community, and cultural ties. It is vital for American Indian children to remain with family and within their community when reunification with their parents is not an option. Lack of financial resources should not be a barrier for a child to reach permanency with relatives.

This modification to the Northstar Care for Children program ensures that children can grow up in supportive, stable homes and maintain connections to their families and Tribal communities.

Thank you for considering this important piece of legislation.

Ryan Salmon
Chair - MUID

MUID promotes the well-being, growth and mutual interests of metropolitan American Indian organizations.
<https://muidmn.org>

List of Voting Member Organizations within the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Group:

Ain Dah Yung
All Nations Indian United Church of Christ
American Indian Community Development Corporation
American Indian Family Center
American Indian Movement – Grand Governing Council
American Indian OIC
Bdote Learning Center
Bois Forte Urban Office
Department of Indian Work
Division of Indian Work
Dream of Wild Health
Indian Child Welfare Act Law Center
Indian Health Board
Indigenous Peoples Task Force
Little Earth of United Tribes Housing Corporation
Little Earth Residents Association
MIGIZI Communications
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Urban Office
Minneapolis American Indian Center
Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce
Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition
MniSota Fund
Native American Community Clinic
Native American Community Development Institute
Nawayee Center School
New Native Theatre
Owámniyomni Okhódayapi
Upper Midwest American Indian Center
Tiwahe Foundation
Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi
White Earth Urban Office