



MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Health and Human Services
March 20, 2025

Chair Wiklund and Health and Human Services Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW - MN), we are writing in support of SF1898, a bill that will provide a fiscal analysis of our child welfare system and a program evaluation. This information will allow more informed recommendations as we seek to reform our current system.

NASW - MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state, representing over 2000 social workers. Our members do both direct practice (clinical and non-clinical) and macro practice. We work as mental health professionals, in child welfare systems, in schools, in hospitals, and provide emergency services. As mandated reporters, we understand the significant impact on families when interacting with our child welfare setting.

We support policies, like SF1898, that support every child growing up in a nurturing and safe environment. We envision a trauma-responsive child welfare system that fosters participation, restoration, safety, and resilience. We appreciate that SF1898 recognizes that transforming current practices is necessary to prevent harm within families and recurrent trauma.

We understand that the current system is complex and change seems daunting. Yet, it's for this reason that SF1898 is particularly important; having a full understanding of our current fiscal approach to financing our child welfare services, along with identifying potential Federal resources, will allow us to develop a clear path forward.

To address the root causes of neglect, we must invest in early intervention for our children and measures that support parents from a relational strengths-based perspective. NASW-MN strongly supports SF1898 as the first step in ensuring we have the best system in place to protect children and allow families to thrive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Karen E. Goodenough'.

Karen E. Goodenough, PhD, LGSW
Executive Director
NASW-MN

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jenny Arneson'.

Jenny Arneson, MSW, LGSW
Legislative Consultant
NASW-MN

Cc: Senator Kunesh