



Council on American-Islamic Relations **Minnesota Chapter**  
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Dear Chair Hoffman and Members of the Human Services Committee,

**I am writing to express my strong support for Senate File 3040 (SF3040) and to urge its swift passage.** This critical legislation aims to modify family support and consumer support programs, enhancing services under disability waivers and consumer-directed community supports. These modifications are essential to address the alarming increase in drowning deaths among Somali children with autism in Minnesota.

Over the past three years, at least eight Somali children with autism have tragically drowned. In 2024 alone, three such incidents have occurred, highlighting a devastating trend that demands immediate action. Notably, in June 2024, 4-year-old Waey's Ali Mohamed drowned in Minnehaha Creek after wandering from his family in Hopkins. Similarly, in October 2024, 11-year-old Mohamed Mohamed was found deceased in an Eden Prairie pond after being reported missing. These heartbreaking losses underscore the urgent need for preventive measures.

Research indicates that children with autism are 160 times more likely to drown than their neurotypical peers. Swimming lessons and water safety education have proven to be effective interventions in reducing this risk. By passing SF3040, we can allocate necessary resources to provide these life-saving programs to vulnerable populations, including Somali children with autism.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations Minnesota (CAIR-MN) has established a task force in collaboration with a coalition of organizations dedicated to addressing this pressing issue. Our collective efforts focus on raising awareness, advocating for policy changes, and implementing community-based solutions to prevent further tragedies.

I urge you to recognize the severity of this crisis and act promptly to pass SF3040. The proposed modifications will enhance support services, facilitate access to swimming lessons, and ultimately save lives. The upcoming hearing on April 2, 2025, presents a pivotal opportunity to advance this legislation and demonstrate our commitment to protecting vulnerable children in our community.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your continued dedication to the well-being of all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jaylani Hussein", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Jaylani Hussein,  
Executive Director  
CAIR-Minnesota

**MINNESOTA**

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