



February 25, 2022

Representative Dave Pinto
Chair, Early Childhood Finance and Policy Committee
503 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Pinto and Members of the Committee:

Minnesota's Prenatal to Three Coalition (PN-3) requests your support for HF 3591, which provides continued support and funding for family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care. Approximately 40% of infants and toddlers and 25% of children ages 3-5 year old were cared for by FFN providers¹ in Minnesota in 2016. Families with children who have special needs, low income families, immigrant and refugee families, single-parents, parents working non-traditional hours and families in rural communities often access family, friends and neighbors to help care for their babies and young children because licensed family care or center care is out reach financially or geographically. Additionally, there are other families that believe family, friends and neighbors can offer important quality care and learning environments that support their cultural or religious values that are not as available in other settings.

Last year, Minnesota dedicated \$3 million in one-time federal CRSSA funding for FFN care, and the legislature allocated an additional \$1.5 million in one-time funding to support FFN providers. These time limited resources have been used to identify and support FFN providers across the state, increase awareness of available educational resources and provide access to training for providers. These grants will provide critical resources to providers who don't always have access to learning and educational materials or know how to access learning on child safety and safe sleep.

We know more Minnesota families have turned to family, friends, and neighbors throughout the last couple of years due to the loss of licensed child care providers and the ongoing challenges of balancing care for young children and maintaining work. The Prenatal to Three Coalition believes all children deserve access to high quality care and learning, regardless of the care provider and setting. We believe HF 3591 provides access to important health, safety, nutrition, and educational resources to FFN providers and helps ensure infants and young children across Minnesota are getting the best care possible.

We encourage you to join us in supporting HF 3591.

Thank you,

Deb Fitzpatrick,
Children's Defense Funds-MN,
Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
West Central Initiative,
Co-Chair

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn,
MN Prenatal to Three (PN-3) Coalition,
Coalition Coordinator

¹ Use of FFN care as their only or primary child care arrangement. (*Friend, Family and Neighbor (FFN) Care, Wilder Research, 2016.*)