



March 18, 2025

**RE: Forensic Interviewing HF2136 (Johnson)**

Dear Rep., Kotyza-Witthuhn and Members of the House Children and Families Finance and Policy,

On behalf of the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (CMAH), we our writing to express our strong support for the continued use of forensic interviews in child protection and criminal justice systems. These interviews are essential for gathering accurate, unbiased information from children to assess allegations of abuse, and they are key to making informed decisions by the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) of professionals across various sectors.

Properly trained forensic interviewers ensure that children can recall events in their own words, minimizing trauma and maximizing the accuracy of information. This approach reduces the need for redundant interviews and helps the MDT coordinate efforts more effectively. The use of forensic interviews is crucial in child protection, criminal investigations, medical assessments, and mental health support. These interviews directly impact a child's well-being, and their experience during the process can influence their future interactions with support systems.

CMAH fully supports forensic interviews as an integral part of the MDT approach and urges continued investment in the training and development of forensic interviewers to ensure that children's voices are heard accurately and respectfully.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

**Linda Sloan** | Executive Director

**Lolita Davis Carter** | Legislative and Policy Director

Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage

The Minnesota Legislature empowered the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies, and procedures of the State of Minnesota. Generally, the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on issues confronting People of African Heritage;
- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on statutes, rules, and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota;
- Serving as a liaison to the federal government, local government units and private organizations on matters relating to People of African Heritage in Minnesota;
- Implementing programs designed to solve problems of People of African Heritage when authorized by statute, rule, or order; and
- Publicizing the accomplishments of People of African Heritage and their contributions to the state.