

March 28, 2023

Dear Members of the Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee:

NAMI Minnesota appreciates the opportunity to share its thoughts about the proposed omnibus bill. Early intervention and support for families are critical to the health and wellbeing of our children. Here are the items we support:

- **Foster Youth and Young Adults:** These young people need additional support as they become adults since they do not have a family to rely on. Thus, we support grant funding for independent living skills for foster youth including providing support to youth beyond age 21 and improved transition planning. We strongly support efforts to ensure that foster youth have access to their Social Security benefits and while we would have preferred stronger language, we support the planning efforts so that we can achieve this goal in the future.
- **Homeless Youth:** Many of these youth also struggle with mental illnesses thus we appreciate the focus on ensuring their basic needs are met, especially housing, through shelters and supportive housing. We had hoped that this would be the year to support parents who live with a mental illness and need to access treatment or who are struggling with their symptoms obtain child care for their young child. We strongly believe this is an excellent way to provide early intervention and to help parents be well so that they can support their child's development.

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Sincerely,

Sue Abderholden, MPH  
Executive Director