



Representative Dave Pinto  
Chair, Health and Human Services Finance & Policy Committee  
503 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

February 28, 2022

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for HF 3591 to support Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) providers across the state before your committee. Our vision as a Coalition is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success. Our coalition is committed to advancing racial equity in our early childhood systems and advocating for policies that benefit Black, Indigenous and other children of color, their families and the programs that serve them.

HF 3591 demonstrates the critical recognition that FFN care is a frequent choice of parents with infants and toddlers, parents in diverse cultural and ethnic communities, and parents working non-standard hour jobs. The shortage of child care providers and the critical role of bonding and development during this period is important to support to all those providing care and education. It is important to offer training and access to supports for FFN providers who provide early care and education to children. These providers are often left out of the critical conversations in our state and need resources, support and attention to reach our youngest children and support thriving families. We must ensure all children birth to kindergarten from low-income families have access to quality care that meets their needs.

The Start Early Funders Coalition supports a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to a continuum of high-quality early care and education programs. A broad range of program types, including our formal and licensed providers as well as our family members, friends and neighbors that care for our children, supported with prioritized state and federal funding is required to support the ECE business model and for our state's economic recovery. We must maintain and continue to grow investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carrie Zelin Johnson".

Carrie Zelin Johnson  
Start Early Funders Coalition Coordinator  
Start Early Funders Coalition

The Start Early Funders Coalition for Children and Minnesota's Future is a collaboration of more than 15 members of Minnesota's philanthropic community. The Coalition provides critical leadership and funding for research, program development, public policy and grant making to improve early childhood efforts in Minnesota. We are working together to ensure every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success.