



February 17, 2021

Dear Members of the Early Childhood Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of Proof Alliance (formerly Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome) I am writing to express our support of HF 668 which would provide grants to child care providers in order for them to more adequately provide child care to children with disabilities.

The mission at Proof Alliance is to prevent fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) and supporting all individuals impacted. Our work focuses on supporting children, youth and adults with FASD and their families across the state of Minnesota. We work with hundreds of families including adoptive, foster, biological and kinship families that are raising children with FASD and who need supports in their schools, child care settings and communities in order for their children to thrive.

Often, we hear from families who are struggling to find appropriate child care for their child who may have unique needs. Children with FASD can have sensory processing issues, co-occurring mental health challenges and impulsive behavior due to their prenatal exposure to alcohol. Given the right supports and environment, children with FASD can do very well in child care settings, but if the provider does not have the training and the resources to accommodate the child's needs, it can often result in a parent losing their "spot" for child care.

Supporting child care providers with grant money to better care for children with disabilities is a wise investment of resources. Parents can be more effective at their jobs and the general wellbeing of the family can increase. The stability for the child, parents, and child care provider is an additional benefit that would result with this funding.

Our parent advocates hear from parents every week who are struggling to find appropriate child care in their community. Funding HF 668 would be a step in the right direction in closing this gap for children with disabilities and their families throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara Messelt".

Sara Messelt
Executive Director, Proof Alliance
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