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March 21, 2022

Dear Chair Schultz and Committee Members,

On behalf of Therapeutic Services Agency, Inc., I am writing to convey our support for and respectfully request the Committee pass **House File 4217 and House File 3815** to bolster and support the care of children in out of home care in the State of Minnesota.

#### **HF4217**

- Foster parents and kinship caregivers play a vital role in caring for children who are unable to remain at home.
- As community-based foster care organizations, we see firsthand that supporting our foster parents to provide excellent care *includes* recruitment of foster parents who are reflective of the communities and culture of the children receiving care.
- It is important that we both continue to increase our support for kinship caregivers and our wider foster care system – as we see outlined in HF4217.
- HF4217 is a critical investment in the important work of building a foster care system that supports children and families.

#### **HF3815**

- Quality Parenting Initiative-MN (QPI) is a movement to improve foster care by placing youth voices, foster parents and birth parents in the center
- QPI-MN launched in 2017 with support from a wide variety of stakeholders and continues to grow as new counties and community-based organizations integrate the best practices for quality parenting that surrounds and supports children and youth in care.
- Critically important to QPI-MN is the technical assistance and training required to teach and sustain best practices
- Please support HF3815 to sustain and grow the QPI-MN movement
- QPI has been embraced by several private foster care agencies in the state of MN. At Therapeutic Services Agency, we have embraced the QPI spirit and have known the benefits of the initiative. Our foster families work to develop relationships with parents/kin of children placed in our care, this is the heartbeat of the work in our foster care program; no better demonstrated by a foster family driving to pick up biological mother for a supervised visit when her car broke down. Mom was there, in her vehicle and foster parents picked her up and brought her to the supervised visit to be with her children. Excellent foster parenting and care for the children.

Therapeutic Services Agency, Inc., asks the Committee to support the passing of HF4217 and HF3815. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Lainie Janke, MSW, LICSW  
Director - Community Based Services  
Therapeutic Services Agency, Inc

