



Representative Jennifer Schultz, Chair  
House Human Services Finance and Policy  
551 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: HF 3404

Dear Chair Schultz,

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) we offer support of HF 3404, legislation that modifies foster care intensive treatment, provides direction to the commissioner of Human Services, and appropriates funding that will increase access to programming.

The proposed legislation expands eligible intensive treatment services to children with mental illness to include services provided to families in the community, subject to federal approval. This change allows services to follow the child, offering continuity from the foster home setting to the family home. Continuity of care is critical to the best interest of children and successful transition to the family home.

The addition also supports the continuation of Collaborative Intensive Bridging Services (CIBS) which provides the opportunity for intensive family therapy in a residential setting to “follow” the child home. CIBS has been a cornerstone service in the Systems of Care federal SAMHSA grant and has shown promising results in shortening length of residential placement for children with mental health needs, increased stability in the family home, and prevention of future need for residential services. By supporting federal funding from the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services, CIBS has the potential to be expanded statewide, filling a gap in the current service array for children.

We also support legislation to add enhanced targeted case management Medicaid reimbursement to fund the use of evidence-based, high-fidelity wraparound service models. Under the federal Family First Prevention Services Act, high-fidelity wraparound service was classified as an evidence-based service eligible, making it eligible for inclusion in FFPSA State Plans. The inclusion of high-fidelity wraparound service would enhance the ability to consider including it as a service covered under FFPSA in the future.

Lastly, we support the proposed increase in medical assistance payments for the wages, training and retention of staff in programs serving the mental health needs of children. As indicated in the February 23, 2021 KARE 11 Investigative Report on “Kids in Crisis,” Minnesota is experiencing an unprecedented workforce shortage, resulting in lack of sufficient services to support children and families. Not only has this affected availability of both community-based and residential services, it has also resulted in children utilizing high cost, intensive resources such as emergency rooms to keep them safe when other more appropriate services are not available.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Freeman", is written over a thin horizontal line.

Matt Freeman, Director

Cc: Representative Kelly Morrison