



**MN AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY PRESERVATION ACT
TO
STOP THE ARBITRARY REMOVAL OF BLACK CHILDREN BY MINNESOTA'S
CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT**

| Senate Author- Bobby Joe Champion | House Author- Esther Agbaje |

Minnesota's African American youth are removed from their homes at an alarming rate and a large number are crossing over from child protection into the juvenile justice system. **Racial disparities are found in the entire process; from initial reporting, screening and assessment to discharge from the system.**

The child protection reform that began under the orders of Governor Dayton failed to address Minnesota's long-standing issue of disproportionality, unequal treatment and poor child welfare outcomes for African American children and their families. The recommendations lead to an astronomical spike in the removal of African American children and *even higher* rates of child protection involvement for these families.

The perpetual clogging of our child protection system with children that are *not* at risk of harm has exhausted the state's resources. Lending to case worker over load, a significant decrease in foster home availability and a nonsensical increase in state spending while leaving children *truly* in need of protection, vulnerable and at risk.

**THE MINNESOTA AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY PRESERVATION ACT WOULD
SERVE TO:**

- ✚ Protect Children and Strengthen Families
- ✚ Reduce the Overall Cost of Child Welfare Services and Out of Home Placement
- ✚ Reduce Law Enforcement and Judicial Systems Costs for Intervention
- ✚ Improve the Mental Health and Social Functioning of African American Children
- ✚ Improve the Child Protection Department's Efficacy

WHY DOES MINNESOTA NEED AN AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY PRESERVATION ACT?

- African American children are over 3 times more likely than their white counterparts to be reported to child protection
- In face of the same or less egregious allegations; African American and children of 2 or more races are removed from their home at a rate 3.1- 5.8 times higher than their white counterparts
- 60% of cases involving African American children are assigned to the family investigation path for *discretionary* reasons compared to 39 % for Caucasian children
- The family investigation track is more punitive, involves the court and places a maltreatment finding on African American parents. This finding causes a loss of employment, housing and increases the families' likelihood of further child protection involvement
- The rights of African American parents are terminated at higher rates. African American and children of 2 or more races are 3-5 times more likely than White children to become a state ward
- African American and children of two or more races are least likely to be adopted before the age of 18
- African American children are the highest population of children moving from child protection to juvenile detention

The Minnesota African American Family Preservation Act would (1) protect the best interests of African American children and (2) promote the stability and security of African American families by establishing minimum standards to prevent arbitrary and unnecessary removal of African American children from their families.

The Act would work to address disparities at every decision point while providing oversight and accountability to the child protection workforce through the creation of an African American Child Welfare Advisory Council appointed by the commissioner and an African American Child Wellbeing Department within DHS.

We all know that healthy families are vital to the success of our children and ultimately, our state. Everyone has a stake in ensuring Minnesota's Child Protection system is fair and equitable. Help us address these racial disparities and the injustice faced by these families through your support of the African American Family Preservation Act.