

April 9, 2025

Representative West and Representative Kotyza-Witthuhn, Chairs
House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: HF 2436 – A4 amendment

Dear Representative West and Representative Kotyza-Witthuhn and Members of the House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee:

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) recognize the urgency to address disproportionality in Minnesota's child welfare system and support the successful implementation of The Act.

Addressing disproportionality and ensuring successful implementation of The Act is contingent on our ability as a system to make necessary investments and shift our system to one that supports children and families in community – lessening the need for child protection involvement. We are disappointed that the House HHS omnibus bill does not address funding needs for statewide implementation of the Act. Counties will begin budgeting, including staffing requests, in the summer of 2025, for local budgets that will support this work in 2027. Without state investments in the areas of staffing, community-based resourcing and economic supports, we are concerned about our ability to address disproportionality and successfully implement the MAAFPCWDA at a local level. Without state funding, implementation needs will fall to county taxpayers –resulting in significant county levy increases across the state.

Successful implementation of The Act, which is transformational in nature, necessitates having clear definitions and guidance and the ability to move the system in a way that incorporates the learnings from early adopters while supporting all entities involved in implementation. In addition to needing clear definitions to guide our work, we need technology that functions and enables the requirements of this work.

We thank Chair West and Chair Kotyza-Witthuhn for the inclusion of funding that supports modernizing the Social Service Information System (SSIS) in HF 2436. SSIS is the underpinning and technology foundation of the work in child protection. We are grateful for your leadership and willingness to address this need, which is one of the critical components of implementing and monitoring the success of the MAAFPCWDA.

In closing, AMC and MACSSA look forward to continued partnership as we invest in and move our system towards successful implementation of the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act.

Sincerely,



Angie Thies - Child Wellbeing Policy Analyst, Association of Minnesota Counties

Cc: Representative Agbaje