



February 22, 2021

Representative Dave Pinto
Chair, Early Childhood Finance and Policy Committee
503 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Pinto and Members of the Committee:

Minnesota's Prenatal to Three Coalition (PN-3) requests your support for HF 316. Approximately 40% of infants and toddlers and 25% of children ages 3-5 year old are cared for by family, friends and neighbors (FFN)¹ in Minnesota. We expect these numbers have likely increased throughout the public health emergency this past year.

While most families struggle to pay for child care, certain families are hit harder by the cost and shortage of child care. Families with child with special needs, low income families, immigrant and refugee families, single-parents, parents working non-traditional hours and families in rural communities. Many of these families turn to family, friends and neighbors to help care for their babies and young children because licensed family care or center care is out reach financially or geographically. However, there are other families that believe family, friends and neighbors can offer important quality care and learning environments that support their cultural or religious values that are not as available in other settings.

The Prenatal to Three Coalition believes all children deserve access to high quality care and learning, regardless of the care provider and setting. We believe HF 316 provides access to important health, safety, nutrition and educational resources to FFN providers and helps ensure infants and young children across Minnesota are getting the best care possible.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our support and and/or request for additional action, please contact our Policy and Legislative Affairs Director, Deb Fitzpatrick at dfitzpatrick@childrensdefense.org or Coalition Coordinator, Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn at Laura@LaCroixDalluhnConsulting.com,

Thank you,

Bharti Wahli,
Children's Defense Fund
Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
West Central Initiative
Co-Chair

¹ Use of FFN care as their only or primary child care arrangement. (Friend, Family and Neighbor (FFN) Care, Wilder Research, 2016.