Nexus
FAMILY HEALING

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee

Re: Support for SF 3970 – Improving Support for Youth with TPLPCs and Extended Foster Care

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Nexus Family Healing, we respectfully urge your support for SF 3970, legislation that addresses critical gaps for children and youth who experience permanency disruption, including those with Transfer of Permanent Legal and Physical Custody (TPLPC), and strengthens Minnesota's Extended Foster Care (EFC) system.

Nexus Family Healing is a Minnesota-based nonprofit serving children, youth, and families with complex needs across the child welfare continuum. We work closely with young people whose permanency outcomes have not provided lasting stability and who require additional, developmentally appropriate support as they transition to adulthood. SF 3970 responds to these realities with thoughtful, targeted improvements.

We strongly support the requirement that youth age 14 and older complete an independent living plan, ensuring intentional planning that engages young people in understanding their goals, options, and future supports. Early and consistent planning is essential to successful transitions to adulthood.

SF 3970 also makes important improvements to Extended Foster Care eligibility, particularly for youth with disabilities. Allowing eligible young people to remain in EFC while accessing disability supports, clarifying eligibility during extended school time, and ensuring foster youth can access Minnesota Paid Leave for bonding or family caregiving promotes equity and stability during critical life transitions.

We further support extending EFC eligibility to youth who achieved TPLPC within six months of turning 18, recognizing that timing alone should not determine access to support for young people navigating significant change. Additionally, the bill strengthens accountability by requiring notification to the DCYF Commissioner when a young person is terminated from foster care.

SF 3970 strengthens Minnesota's commitment to youth who have experienced trauma and instability by improving planning, extending access to support, and increasing system accountability. We respectfully urge your support for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Kokal

Christopher D. Kokal
Senior Director of Growth and Advocacy
Nexus Family Healing