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March 24, 2026

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3235
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: SF 4335 – Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee:

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) and the Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) thank Senator Champion for his leadership in authoring SF 4335 and are supportive of the goal to uphold the best interests of African American children and youth who are disproportionately represented within Minnesota's child welfare system. In partnership with Representative Agbaje, we thank Senator Champion for addressing the need for the case review function to be the responsibility of the state and addressing resources that are needed to support community-based, culturally responsive programming. The work of establishing and building a continuum of services and supports across Minnesota's 87 counties is critical to successfully implement the MAAFPCWDA.

Counties remain committed to being strong partners in addressing inequities within Minnesota's child welfare system. We welcome the shared commitment from legislators and state agency partners to find a balance between what we spend on administrative functions and what we invest in services and support to families.

Sincerely,

Julie Ring
Executive Director, AMC

Paul Verrette
Director, MACSSA
Human Services Policy Analyst, AMC

Nathan Jesson
Executive Director, MICA