



Kim Ransom <kimransomhouse44@gmail.com>

Support Letter for HB 19-1142 (Kyle Forti Bill)

1 message

Kelly Dore <director@nhtsc.org>

Fri, Mar 15, 2019 at 8:59 AM

To: "jonathan.singer.house@state.co.us" <jonathan.singer.house@state.co.us>, Kim Ransom <kimransomhouse44@gmail.com>

Representatives Ransom and Singer,

I was hoping to get there to testify for this bill, however, I may not make it in time. If you would like to read my letter of support from the National Human Trafficking Survivor Coalition, please do. I have also emailed all the committee members.

I am writing on behalf of the National Human Trafficking Survivor Coalition to ask you to support HB19-1142, Safe Family Option for Parents. Our coalition works with survivors of human trafficking, many of whom have been in the state foster care system, nearly 90% of children who are in the system will experience some type of exploitation or be exposed to a crime against them. HB19-1142 permits a parent or guardian to use the assistance of a temporary care assistance program operated by a qualified nonprofit organization to identify an appropriate and safe approved temporary caregiver to whom the parent or guardian can choose to delegate temporary care responsibility of a minor through power of attorney. We assume that a parent or guardian has the skills and tools to successfully raise a child, but that is not always the case. Some people due to their socioeconomic status, cultural upbringing and lack of education have not been shown how to properly care for their children, this does not make them bad people or warrant the child custody being terminated, rather we need to work to support them and help them make better decisions with their children and lives.

We have worked in other states (Illinois, Indiana, etc.) with successful Safe Family programs and they work to help prevent the child from getting "lost" in the Foster Care system. Safe Families is vetted, trained and supported more than the current foster care standards. It reduces perverse incentives on child welfare by people who do not have the best intent of the child (which leads to abuse and sex trafficking for many). We highly believe in being proactive with our "broken Foster Care system" and this bill will lead Colorado on the right track. This program will allow parents to invoke their power of attorney to a family in town who knows their child and is looking out for the best interest of the child, while the parent(s) work on regaining custody while learning basic parental responsibilities. If Safe Families is not allowed, it is **discrimination of the ruling class on the poor**, and we have seen it first hand, with survivors who were not supported in the foster care system. When you do not have education or support, you have no choices but to be exploited, as there are no options for you to move outside of your environment. HB19-1142 will create a program helps to address the vulnerabilities of poverty, lack of education and cultural changes to create stronger families in Colorado. In the end, prevention is key to addressing some of our societal ills, because we have been reacting far too long.

Please vote YES on Safe Family Option for parents, children and Colorado.

*Kelly Dore***Executive Director****National Human Trafficking Survivor Coalition**