



620 S. Capitol Avenue, Suite 325 • Lansing MI 48933

Phone (517) 485-8552

Janet Reynolds Snyder, MBA, Executive Director

www.michfed.org

Janet Reynolds Snyder, MBA, Executive Director: janet@michfed.org

Kadi Prout, LMSW, Associate Executive Director: kadi@michfed.org

Elizabeth Henderson, Director of Policy and Research, elizabeth@michfed.org

Jenny Crichton, Director of Member Relations & Events: jenny@michfed.org

Rose Homa, Director of Administration & Operations: rose@michfed.org

September 21, 2021

FULL MEMBERS

ACTS II Ministry for Teens
Adoption Option, Inc.
Bethany Christian Services
D.A. Blodgett–St. John's
Catholic Charities of Jackson, Lenawee &
Hillsdale Counties
Catholic Charities of Shiawassee
& Genesee Counties
Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan
Catholic Charities West Michigan
Catholic Social Services of the Upper
Peninsula
Child & Family Charities
Child & Family Services
of Northeast Michigan
Child & Family Services
of Northwestern Michigan
Child & Family Services
of the Upper Peninsula
The Children's Center
Christ Child House
Eagle Village
Family & Children Services
Family Outreach Center
Family Service & Children's Aid
Federation of Youth Services
Forever Families
Fostering Futures
Fostering Solutions
Guiding Harbor
Hands Across the Water
Highfields, Inc.
Holy Cross Services
Homes for Black Children
Hope Network Behavioral Health Services
House of Providence
Insight Youth & Family Connections
Judson Center
Livingston County Catholic Charities
Methodist Children's Home Society
The New Foster Care
New Light Child & Family Institute
Ruth Ellis Center
St. Louis Center
St. Vincent Catholic Charities
Samaritas
Spaulding for Children
Starr Commonwealth
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan
TimberCreek Ranch
U.P. KIDS
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions
Vista Maria
Wedgwood Christian Services
Wellspring Lutheran Services
West Michigan Partnership for Children
Whaley Children's Center
Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Children's Advocacy Centers of Michigan
Fostering Forward Michigan
Michigan CASA, Inc.
Michigan Juvenile Detention Association
Michigan State University School
of Social Work
VFW National Home for Children

The Honorable John Reilly
Michigan House of Representatives
Anderson House Office Building
124 N. Capitol Avenue, #895
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Representative Reilly,

On behalf of the Michigan Federation for Children and Families, thank you for the opportunity to submit a letter of support on House Bill 5293, which would amend the *Michigan Zoning Enabling Act* to increase the number of children allowed to live at a state-licensed residential facility.

The Michigan Federation for Children and Families is a statewide association whose 54-member agencies, all nonprofit community-based organizations, work through contract with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to provide supportive services to children and their families throughout Michigan's 83 counties. Community-based organizations are mission-driven, human serving agencies playing a vital role in providing services and positive outcomes for the overall safety, health and well-being of children and their families in Michigan communities.

Amending the *Michigan Zoning Enabling Act* through HB 5293 will allow the community-based organizations contracting with the State of Michigan to serve more children needing the critical care provided by residential treatment providers. When children are unable to stay with their families because of safety concerns, foster parents and licensed residential settings provide care for them until they can be safely reunified with their parents or until they can find adoptive homes if it's not safe for them to return home.

Approximately 13,500 Michigan children are in foster care, some of whom live in residential settings impacted by the *Zoning Enabling Act* that restricts them to serving 6 children per 20 acres of land. By allowing up to 10 individuals to receive care at a residential facility, this HB will play a role in alleviating some of the foster care placement needs our state struggles with, while also allowing for youth to live in family-like community-based settings. Children who are temporarily placed in residential settings receive child-centered treatment focused on their clinical and behavioral health needs.

A child-to-adult ratio of 10 to 1 is in alignment with the ratio established in contract by the MDHHS. HB 5293 will ensure the *Michigan Zoning Enabling Act* and the *Child Care Licensing Act* (PA 116 of 1973) are also in alignment and will help children access the right services in their communities.

Thank you for your sponsorship of this important legislation and for your interest in making a difference in the lives of some of our state's most vulnerable children.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Reynolds Snyder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J".

Janet Reynolds Snyder, MBA
Executive Director