



May 4, 2021

Dear Honorable Members of Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing to you today to express The Kempe Foundation's support for HB21-1248: Colorado Children's Trust Fund Act. The role of Colorado Children's Trust Fund Board is an important one, and expanding its scope and membership will provide great opportunities for the state of Colorado. An important component of the Board's work is supporting the Governor, state agencies and other organizations in developing a state plan to prevent child maltreatment and, also, supporting organizations that provide child abuse and neglect prevention programming.

*Exposure to trauma can lead to toxic stress, which inhibits brain development and impacts children's learning, behavior, or both. A large body of research has demonstrated negative effects of trauma on students' cognitive, academic, behavioral, and social-emotional functioning. Children have suffered disproportionately from the lockdowns, closed schools and general isolation. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought Colorado to an inflection point in the care and protection of our children and families. It has hit our most at-risk communities the hardest. Children and families in many communities are experiencing increased stress from loss of income, instability in housing, distance from social supports and an increasing inability to cover their basic needs. **The trauma children are experiencing as a result is certain to have major, long-term adverse impacts for them individually and for our communities and state.***

The Kempe Foundation appreciates the willingness of the sponsor, Representative Amabile and the Department of Human Services for working in partnership with us to strengthen the board and support Colorado's kids.

We urge the committee to support HB21-1248 to realize the full potential of the Colorado Children's Trust Fund Act.

John D. Faught

Executive Director of Public Policy

The Kempe Foundation

p. 303.864.5304 c. 303.884.7611 f 303.864.5302

John.Faught@Kempe.org www.Kempe.org

THE KEMPE FOUNDATION

The Gary Pavilion at Anschutz Medical Campus
13123 E. 16th Ave., B390 · Aurora, CO 80045 · p 303.864.5300 · www.kempe.org