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State of Minnesota  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-FIFTH  
SESSION

HOUSE FILE No. 2143

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to human services; requiring the commissioner to establish a kinship  
1.3 support program for grandparents and relatives caring for related children.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **KINSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM.**

1.6 (a) The commissioner of human services shall establish, with the assistance of  
1.7 and in consultation with the Minnesota Kinship Caregivers Association, a program for  
1.8 grandparents and relatives who are raising children who are related to them that provides  
1.9 seamless financial and support services to grandparents and relatives raising related  
1.10 children whose parents do not live in the same home.

1.11 (b) The commissioner shall include in the program the following components,  
1.12 subject to federal approval, if necessary:

1.13 (1) a basic child-only grant allowing the kinship child to be categorically eligible for  
1.14 MFIP, cash assistance, medical and dental insurance, free school lunch, and food support  
1.15 for children living in kinship homes without the parents;

1.16 (2) the use of TANF or maintenance of effort funds for all school-required fees,  
1.17 respite, and child care expenses;

1.18 (3) a grant that follows the child, is administered according to the individual child's  
1.19 income, and is without consideration of parental child support;

1.20 (4) an individual evaluation of each child living with a kinship caregiver. For  
1.21 purposes of this requirement, an evaluation of children in the same home as one unit is  
1.22 not sufficient;

1.23 (5) hands-on assistance through the application process to help kinship families find  
1.24 other assistance, based on need, that may be available to the child, such as SSDI, Social

2.1 Security, waived services, child care, respite, tutoring, and required school activities  
2.2 reimbursement;

2.3 (6) a specific color-coded section on the TANF application for the kinship child-only  
2.4 grant, which clearly pinpoints necessary information; and

2.5 (7) a continuation of benefits in the event of a transfer of legal custody from kinship  
2.6 caregiver to another designated kinship caregiver.

2.7 (c) Children who are living with a kinship caregiver and the kinship caregiver  
2.8 are eligible for this program. For purposes of this program, kinship caregiver includes  
2.9 the following relationships: grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin, sibling, stepfamily, or  
2.10 godparent, and the caregiver who has legal custody or is a de facto third-party custodian as  
2.11 defined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 257C.