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## Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board's Position on the Family Policy Board Proposal

January 21, 2009

### *Background:*

*On November 10, 2008, Dr. Jack Westman presented to the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board the Family Policy Board proposal and asked the Board for its endorsement. The Board voted to bring together a subcommittee to review the proposal and make a formal recommendation to the Board. The subcommittee met on January 8, 2009 and presented its formal recommendation to the Board on January 21, 2009.*

*The subcommittee consisted of the following members: Anne Arnesen, Coral Butson, Nic Dibble, Jessica Kelly (designee for Senator Lassa), Lisa Patrick, Ann Rulseb (designee for Jan Cummings), Dick Schlimm, and Natalie Verette (designee for Representative Seidel).*

### General comments regarding the Family Policy Board proposal:

- Current membership and structure of the Family Policy Board is very similar to the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board.
- The proposed size of the Family Policy Board is large and potentially unmanageable.
- The new Department of Children and Families is the biggest change in state government since the Family Policy Board was originally proposed. There is now a state agency devoted exclusively to children and family issues. A Family Policy Board is no longer needed.
- The Department of Children and Families already has plans to do a number of items identified in the proposal and intends to work very closely with the Children's Trust Fund in making them happen.
- The new Department has the authority to bring people together to work on specific issues that affect children and families and identify ways to make things better. Need to allow the Department the opportunity to succeed.
- The proposal accurately describes some real issues in service delivery for children and families, which are being addressed or can be addressed by the new Department and the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board.
- Coral Butson talked with several other states that have similar structures and they aren't as successful in meeting their original intent.
- Many counties already have coordinating councils and/or family policy boards. State shouldn't mandate counties to create family collaborative councils.
- The proposal isn't cost neutral as indicated – there will be costs associated

with expanding the focus of the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board as well as in supporting counties' efforts to establish family collaborative councils.

- The Board should think creatively about filling the vacancies on the board to help us address some of the real concerns identified in the proposal.

Conclusion:

The subcommittee charged with looking at the Family Policy Board proposal recommended to the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board to not support or endorse the proposal. Based on the creation of the new Department of Children and Families and its intention to address many of the items in the proposal and work in close collaboration with the Children's Trust Fund, the subcommittee believed that a Family Policy Board is not needed. Instead, the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board should continue to support the mission and work of the new Department and help the agency succeed. The Children's Trust Fund is also already addressing many of the issues raised in the Family Policy Board proposal. The subcommittee believed strongly that the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board should provide more leadership and advocacy on its core mission of preventing child abuse and neglect.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board agreed with the subcommittee's recommendation and voted to not support or endorse the Family Policy Board proposal. In addition, the Board recommended submitting this summary to the Strengthening Families Legislative Committee as its formal written position regarding the Family Policy Board.