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Dear legislators,

I am writing to you today on my daughter's "Adoption Day": 22 years ago, she joined our family as a baby through DCF foster placement, and we adopted her two years later. The past 22 years have had many joyful and many challenging moments. Our family needed a lot of support due to her executive functioning and behavior challenges as well as complicated birth family histories, and we found that critical support through Post Permanency services, and eventually through the adoption-competent clinicians our Post Permanency Service Provider guided us toward.

Seven years ago, I joined Lund's Post Permanency team myself and have been providing support to adoptive and guardianship families ever since. It has been an honor to take all that I have learned as an adoptive parent and use it to help others who are feeling lost and in need of guidance and encouragement.

Adoptive families utilize the mental health system at disproportionately high rates, yet finding adoption-competent therapists is difficult. With such a gaping lack of understanding, Post Permanency workers can provide critical support not just to families but to the many school and mental health teams we are part of at our clients' request. Our cases have grown in both number and intensity as we are increasingly called on to fulfill roles that over-stretched providers in other roles cannot.

One of the great strengths of our program is that we can work with families long-term, helping keep the child's needs and narrative alive as other team members change. We can support families in seeing the progress their children are making over time, using a strengths-based approach that emphasizes building the attachment relationship between parents and children. In supporting parents to return to positive connection again and again, we can facilitate healing for all family members and increase the likelihood of the family staying together and consolidating their attachment gains.

I am asking you to increase the funding for Post Permanency Services so that our programming can continue to help every family who needs support and so that we can provide intensive services to all who need it. Please increase base funding for Post Permanency Services Programs by \$300,000. This program needs and deserves to be fully funded.

Today, our daughter is thriving in college where she is studying Occupational Therapy. She hopes to work with children during her career so she can give back, as so many providers helped her thrive when she needed support. I hope you will consider increasing funding for vital Post Permanency services to help more children and their families thrive in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Amyot

Post Permanency provider for Lund Family Center

Adoptive parent and former recipient of Post Permanency Services

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