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*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*House of Representatives*  
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September 15, 2021

The Honorable Michael Finn  
Joint Committee on Children, Families and  
Persons with Disabilities, House Chair  
24 Beacon Street, Room 146  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Adam Gomez  
Joint Committee on Children, Families and  
Persons with Disabilities, Senate Chair  
24 Beacon Street, Room 413-B  
Boston, MA 02133

**RE: H.243** *An Act expanding access to adoption*; **H245** *An Act to provide relief for the cost of child care*

Dear Chair Finn, Chair Gomez, and esteemed Members of the Committee,

I write today to register my wholehearted support for **H.243** *An Act expanding access to adoption* filed by Representative Jack Lewis and **H.245** *An Act to provide relief for the cost of child care* filed by Representative Jay Livingstone. As a co-sponsor of these pieces of legislation, I respectfully request that they receive favorable reports when they are reported on by the Committee.

Caring for children across the Commonwealth is a top priority of mine, ensuring all children are supported fully emotionally, physically, and mentally. Both of these bills are important steps the legislature can take to support and protect our children.

**H.243** *An Act expanding access to adoption*

Involvement in the foster care system leads to uncertainty for children, but staying with siblings offers a constant and reassuring presence in the children's lives. When children are placed in foster care, placing them together reduces children's losses and preserves kinship ties. Accordingly, as is done in many states, older siblings are allowed to adopt younger siblings so long as the older sibling meets the adoption criteria.

H.243 would allow any person over the age of 18 and who meets the criteria for adoptive parents to adopt a younger sibling, uncle, or aunt. This change in the statute would allow

for more families to remain together and maintain the kinship ties that are crucial to the wellbeing of foster care involved youth. The Commonwealth should join the majority of the United States in allowing an older sibling or family member to adopt a younger sibling or other younger family member.

**H245** *An Act to provide relief for the cost of child care*

Child care is a critical part of the economy and workforce. As is continually shown throughout the pandemic, child care is necessary for parents and guardians to return to work and to providing young children with the access to education for educational development. Despite how crucial child care is to our economy and to our families, it is expensive, making it inaccessible for many.

This bill would increase the child tax credit for the first time since 2002. While this change does not eligibility criteria, it does updates the amount of credit a family can receive which is crucial to aiding our families across the Commonwealth in access child care. Without functioning child care, we will not be able to fully recover from the economic effects of the pandemic. Lack of child care primarily affects women returning to the workforce as they are more likely to be required to stay home with children. Passing this legislation to increase the child care tax credit will improve access to child care, supporting everyone in returning to the workforce but most importantly supporting women to ensure they have equal opportunity for career success.

Thank you for your thorough and thoughtful consideration of the legislation before you. I hope that the Committee will advance **H.243 and H.245** with favorable recommendations so that the merits of the proposals may be considered by the House of Representatives in a timely manner.

If there are any follow-up questions or any additional information needed, please do not hesitate to reach out via email to [tricia.farley-bouvier@mahouse.gov](mailto:tricia.farley-bouvier@mahouse.gov).

Sincerely,



Tricia Farley-Bouvier, State Representative  
3rd Berkshire District