

**Subject** Informal kinship caregiver support grants; support for adoptive, foster, and kinship families

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## Summary

This bill establishes the informal kinship caregiver support grant program in section 256N.265, for the commissioner of human services to provide grants to eligible community-based nonprofit organizations to provide informal kinship caregivers with connections to resources and support. Eligible community-based organizations must have a demonstrated history of providing kinship caregiver support, the ability to increase caregiver capacity, and the ability to serve diverse populations. Grant funds may be used to:

- assess informal kinship caregiver and child needs;
- provide connection to local and statewide resources;
- provide case management to assist with complex cases; and
- provide supports to reduce the need for child welfare involvement or risk of child welfare involvement.

Section 2 of the bill appropriates money for the new grant program, and requires the commissioner to use up to 10 percent of funds in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 to contract for an external evaluation of the grant program.

Section 3 of the bill appropriates money from the general fund to the commissioner of human services to expand financial support for adoptive, foster, and kinship families within the existing program under section 256N.261. It requires the commissioner to make grants to eligible agencies for support to relative caregivers and prospective relative caregivers, including licensing support and other ongoing services. The section also requires the commissioner to give priority to grantees that are licensing agencies with demonstrated expertise in supporting relative caregivers.