January 28, 2022

To: Senator Arch and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee

From: Aubrey Mancuso, Executive Director

Re: Support for LB 932

All our children deserve every opportunity to thrive regardless of the circumstances they are born into. The state has a particular responsibility for the well-being of children who formally enter the state’s care. Voices for Children supports LB 932 because it would preserve a valuable resource for children in foster care and has the potential to help facilitate positive outcomes and mitigate potential negative impacts.

We know that for a child being separated from your family of origin is often experienced as a trauma, regardless of the challenges within that family. Children who spend time in the foster care system are at risk for a variety of potential challenges as they transition into adulthood. These challenges include a risk of unstable housing or homelessnes, educational challenges, and inadequate employment or job preparation. This can lead to young people entering adulthood in a tenuous financial position and perpetuate cycles of intergenerational poverty.

Additional financial resources for young people in this situation can mitigate some of these potential challenges. When we look at issues related to poverty, we often focus on income. However, assets, such as a savings account, are often more critical for financial stability as they allow for individuals to weather unexpected challenges and emergencies. Young adults in the foster care system are less likely to have a financial safety net in the form of familial support. As such, using social security benefits to help increase the financial stability of young people in our foster care system is important to helping them to helping them get on a path to a more secure future.

We urge the committee to advance LB 932. Thank you.