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Governor Tony Evers
Secretary Emilie Amundson

Division of Safety and Permanence

August 19, 2019

Sue Lindberg, Co-coordinator
Nicole Fischer, Co-coordinator
St. Croix County Citizen Review Panel
St. Croix County Department of Health & Human Services
1752 Dorset Lane
New Richmond, WI 54017

Dear Ms. Lindberg and Ms. Fischer:

Thank you for your timely submission of St. Croix County Citizen Review Panel's annual report. This letter responds to the citizen review panel annual report response requirements set forth in the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

The Citizen Review Panel submitted two recommendations to improve child protection services at the state level. A brief summarized statement of each recommendation and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) response follows:

- 1. Our panel strongly recommends that the state reach out to county/city judges and recommend that there be the same judge from start to finish for child protection cases. And that the state give us advice on how we reach out to our own county judges to encourage this. Judge consistency is the key to proper case plan and follow up. We also recommend that there be discussion on this at our state meeting.*

The DCF is collaborating with court partners in identifying ways to improve the juvenile court process, particularly in light of our state's recent Child and Family Services Reviews. This collaboration has included meeting regularly with key stakeholders, through which process we have noted that the importance of judicial leadership has been consistently highlighted. Our efforts to address this will continue through 2020 as a part of our state's Program Improvement Plan.

- 2. We would also like information on the Guardian ad litem study that was done a couple years ago by the state. We would also like this discussed at the state meeting.*

The DCF is aware of the 2016 Guardian ad Litem Subcommittee study, will provide your panel with resources related to this study and welcomes further discussion about this at a future statewide panel meeting.

Thank you for your panel's continued dedication and efforts on behalf of Wisconsin children and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wendy Henderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wendy" and last name "Henderson" clearly distinguishable.

Wendy Henderson
Division Administrator