



April 13, 2026

Rep. Tina Liebling, Co-Chair
House Judiciary Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Building, 5th Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Peggy Scott, Co-Chair
House Judiciary Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Building, 2nd Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Support HF 1775 Pre-Trial Data Bill

Dear Co-Chairs Liebling and Scott:

At Arnold Ventures, we are committed to maximizing opportunity and minimizing injustice through evidence-based policy. We invest in research to determine what works, then partner with grantees, stakeholders, and lawmakers to scale proven solutions.

With respect to public safety, states invest millions of taxpayer dollars to keep communities safe. Taxpayers deserve to know whether these investments actually reduce crime. The best way to ensure tax dollars are well spent is to rigorously evaluate whether criminal justice policies work. But we can't do that unless we collect the data.

While Minnesota collects significant data post-conviction, it fails to gather critical information at the front end of the system. The Pre-Trial Data Bill will help fill in the missing data gaps, allowing researchers to track public safety outcomes and investments.

Because we believe more data will help lawmakers make better policy, Arnold Ventures supports HF 1775.

Thank you,

Alyson Clements
Director of Advocacy

C: Members of the House Judiciary Finance and Policy Committee



State of Minnesota
Board of Public Defense

331 Second Avenue South, Suite 900
Minneapolis, MN 55401
www.pubdef.state.mn.us

(612) 200-8755
FAX: (612) 349-2568
william.ward@mnpd.us

William M. Ward
State Public Defender

April 13, 2026

Re: Support for HF1775

Dear: Chair Scott, Chair Liebling,
and Members of the House Judiciary, Finance, and Civil Law Committee

I write to urge your support for HF 1775, a bill requiring the Department of Corrections and courts involved in criminal cases to report pretrial data to the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission (MSGC). This data is essential for the MSGC to make informed recommendations that improve statewide bail and pretrial practices.

As you know, our agency represents the vast majority of individuals accused of crimes in Minnesota. Each day, we see how indigent individuals are unnecessarily held in custody on nonviolent charges simply because they cannot afford bail. During the onset of COVID-19, we saw clearly how many people remained incarcerated under these circumstances. In collaboration with stakeholders, many of these individuals were released—and importantly, recidivism did not increase, and failure-to-appear rates declined.

Every year, tens of thousands of individuals are booked into local jails across Minnesota. Those who remain in custody are disproportionately poor or unhoused, and disproportionately Black, Brown, and Indigenous. This comes at a significant cost to taxpayers—at least \$55 per day to incarcerate legally innocent individuals—without any measurable benefit to public safety.

Minnesotans deserve transparency and accountability in the pretrial system. Yet currently, lawmakers and the public lack access to comprehensive, county-level data that would provide a clear picture of how pretrial decisions are made. This lack of transparency limits the ability to identify systemic inequities and undermines informed policymaking.

HF 1775 addresses this gap by requiring all 87 counties to collect and report standardized pretrial data, including:

- Demographic information such as race, ethnicity, age, sex, gender, housing status, and occupation;
- Bail-related data, including whether bail was set, the amount, the presiding judge, whether release occurred, length of detention, and how bail was paid;

- Information about other pending cases; and
- Case outcomes.

Pretrial incarceration has far-reaching consequences. Individuals held in jail before trial are more likely to experience job loss, housing instability, disruptions in treatment and mental health care, and strained family connections—factors that are critical to stability and public safety.

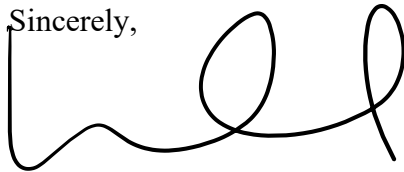
National research shows that individuals detained pretrial are significantly more likely to be sentenced to incarceration—and to receive longer sentences—than those released pending trial. While Minnesota lacks comprehensive statewide data, smaller studies indicate that these harms fall most heavily on low-income individuals and communities of color.

Minnesota's pretrial system profoundly affects individuals, families, and communities. It should not operate without transparency. HF 1775 is a necessary step toward data-driven, equitable reform.

I respectfully urge you to support its passage.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a wavy line, representing the name William M. Ward.

William M. Ward
State Public Defender



Dear Co-Chairs Scott, Liebling, and Members of the Committee,

Violence Free Minnesota, the coalition to end relationship abuse, and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) write today in support of HF 1775, a bill to help Minnesota collect data to understand the ways pretrial bail is being used in our state. Our coalitions represent over 100 programs who provide domestic and sexual violence services in every county in the state. This information is important to ensuring that our pretrial system is finely tuned towards public safety, without undue burden on liberty.

Survivors have a strong interest in state and local decisionmakers having accurate information about the pretrial bail process. Survivors of domestic and sexual violence come to the pretrial system with an extreme diversity of opinions: some want their abuser in jail until trial, others want them out as soon as possible; some feel pressured to post bail on behalf of an abusive partner, others couldn't do that even if they wanted to. But all survivors share one goal: they want the violence to stop.

Similarly, when we ask our member programs about the pretrial systems in their cities and counties, their experiences vary greatly. The mechanics of how conditions are determined, how bail is set, how victim notification occurs, and more change based on jurisdiction.

Carefully examining which of our pretrial systems are most effective at stopping violence is a priority for our coalitions. Given the wide range of survivors' opinions on the pretrial system, and the wide range of program experiences, our coalitions are always looking for more data to try to determine what will be safest for survivors. Safety planning and decisionmaking for survivors is always a highly individualized process, which must be taken on a case-by-case basis. But these individualized assessments are most effective when paired with accurate big-picture data.

Additionally, having a greater understanding of the efficacy of the different aspects of our pretrial system will help our advocates prepare survivors for what to expect when a criminal case starts. Survivors have a lot of unknowns when the person who hurt them gets arrested: When will the person who hurt me be released? What will the court make them do? Do I need to get my own Order For Protection? Am I safe now? This bill will help us, in a broad sense, start to answer those questions with more confidence.

For the foregoing reasons, Violence Free Minnesota and MNCASA are happy to support HF 1775 and ask for your support as well.

Katie Kramer and Nikki Engel
Co-Executive Directors
Violence Free Minnesota

Ash Taylor-Gougé
Executive Director
MNCASA



OFFICE OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY ATTORNEY

John J. Choi

April 13th, 2026

Co-Chair

Rep. Peggy Scott (R) District: 31B
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4231
E-mail: rep.peggy.scott@house.mn.gov

Co-Chair

Rep. Tina Liebling (DFL) District: 24B
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-0573
E-mail: rep.tina.liebling@house.mn.gov

RE: HF 1775/SF 1908: Pre-Trial Data Bill

Dear Legislators,

I urge you to support HF 1775/SF 1908, a vital bill that would require Minnesota counties to annually report pre-trial data to the Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

Each year, more than 69,000 people are booked into local jails across Minnesota. Many of them remain incarcerated simply because they lack the financial means to pay bail, while others facing the same charges are released because they or their families can afford it. We can all agree that a person's liberty should not be determined by their wealth—or lack thereof. Before we can consider, let alone agree on, any reforms to the money bail system, we need a clear understanding of how it operates and impacts communities throughout Minnesota.

Currently, there is no centralized or standardized process for collecting the data necessary to evaluate our bail system. This lack of transparency hinders you, as lawmakers, from addressing its impact and prevents the public from forming informed opinions on the changes they want to see.



*John J. Choi, Ramsey County Attorney
345 Wabasha Street, Suite 120
Saint Paul, MN 55102-1432
Phone: 651-266-3079*



In Ramsey County, I am proud of the work that I, alongside our Sheriff and County Manager, have led to improve jail data transparency. We now have a publicly accessible jail data [dashboard](#), a significant step forward. However, without uniform statewide data collection, this effort will have limited value for the rest of Minnesota.

HF 1775 is a much-needed step toward government transparency. It is critical for understanding a system with profound consequences for liberty and safety in every Minnesota community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Choi
Ramsey County Attorney

345 Wabasha Street North, Suite 120 • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-1432
TELEPHONE: 651-266-3079 • FAX: 651-266-3015





April 13, 2026

Co-Chair Rep. Tina Liebling
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-0573
E-mail: rep.tina.liebling@house.mn.gov

Co-Chair Rep. Peggy Scott
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4231
E-mail: rep.peggy.scott@house.mn.gov

Dear Co-Chairs and members of the committee,

The Minnesota Justice Research Center (MNJRC) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to driving meaningful change to Minnesota's criminal legal system through rigorous and community-centered research, education, and policy development. We write in support of HF 1775, a bill that would require the collection of statewide pretrial data across systems in Minnesota.

A recent poll conducted in Minnesota found that 80 percent of Minnesotans support requiring statewide collection of pretrial data. This level of public support is not surprising. Over the past five years, MNJRC has conducted several in-depth studies on Minnesota's pretrial system and spoken with community members and system stakeholders across the state and country. Through this work, we have consistently heard that greater data transparency is needed.

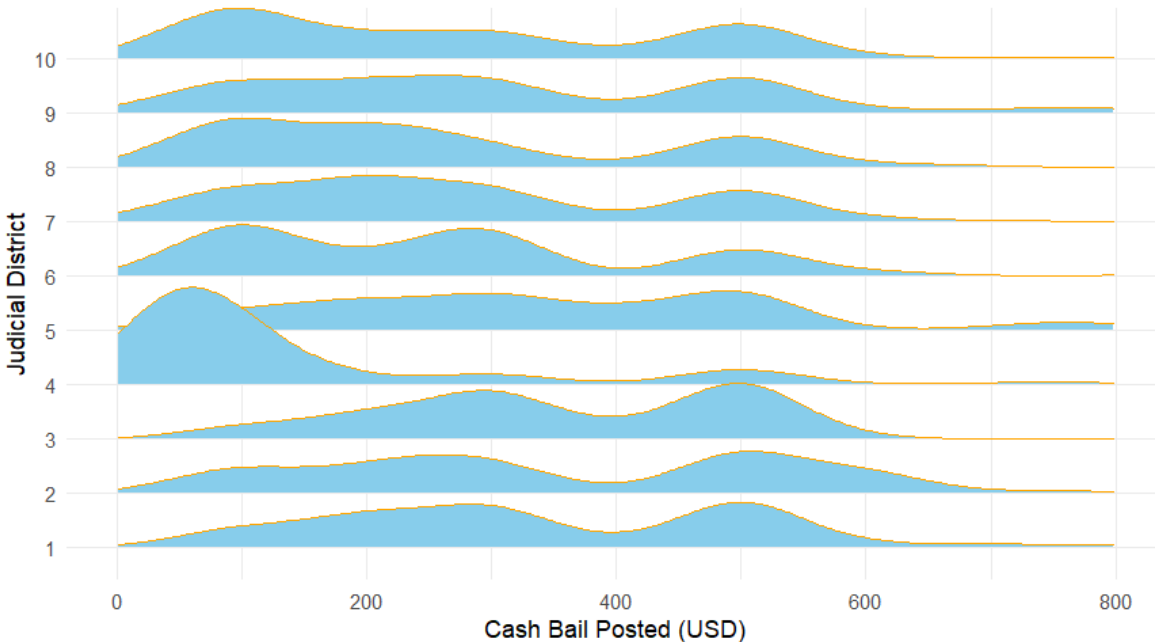
Our research has found that Minnesota's current pretrial data system fails to meet basic standards for quality, transparency, and equity. In 2025, MNJRC issued a report to the Minnesota Legislature recommending the creation of a statewide pretrial data system. HF 1775 represents an important step toward that goal by requiring that pretrial data be transferred to a single agency responsible for housing the information and making it accessible to the public for further analysis.

Currently, data relevant to pretrial release and detention at the state level is primarily held by two agencies: the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the State Court Administrator's Office (SCAO). By requiring each of these agencies to report their data to a single centralized location and ensuring public accessibility, this bill would allow for more accurate and streamlined analyses beyond what MNJRC was able to complete during our legislative study. Our analyses with currently available data are ongoing. Figure 1 visualizes the distribution of posted cash bail amounts by Judicial District. This shows, for example, that the 4th judicial district skews towards lower amounts per case



for posted bail amounts, while districts 1, 2, and 3 skew towards higher amounts.

Figure 1: Ridge Plot of Posted Cash Bail by Judicial District



Data: 2018-2024 MN SCAO. Bail amounts are top-coded at \$800.

While this gives a glimpse of how case amounts vary across districts, it doesn't show what bail amounts are like for individuals, who can have multiple simultaneous bail amounts at the same time. A centralized data system would allow for more streamlined analyses of bail at the person-level to better understand the impact of the system.

Expanded data access is critical not only for evaluating the current system but also for ensuring that any future policy changes can be carefully studied and assessed.

As an organization committed to rigorous research and evidence-based policy, we respectfully urge members of the committee to support the passage of HF 1775.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,

Justin Terrell
Executive Director
Minnesota Justice Research Center



PRETRIAL DATA TRANSPARENCY ACT

Improving Pretrial Data Collection to Prioritize Safety & Fairness

OVERVIEW:

The Pretrial Data Transparency Act enhances the transparency of Minnesota's pretrial system by requiring the collection, analysis, and reporting of pretrial data. The bill requires that pretrial data be reported to the Department of Public Safety and the Sentencing Guidelines Commission, analyzed for trends and disparities, and used to provide recommendations to the Legislature for system improvements, focusing on community safety and well-being. The lack of pretrial data presents an obstacle for those working to understand and improve pre-trial practices statewide.

KEY PROVISIONS:

Data Reporting: Requires the systematic collection and reporting of pretrial data, including:

- Number of individuals held in jail pretrial.
- Bail amounts set and whether individuals paid their bail.
- Relationship between bail amounts and length of pretrial detention.
- The likelihood of pleading guilty among those jailed pretrial versus those released.

Public Transparency: Ensures that collected data is made available to research institutions, allowing researchers to analyze the data, identify trends, and publish their findings for use by community members and policymakers.

RATIONALE:

Minnesota's current pretrial data system lacks transparency, making it challenging to assess key aspects of pretrial detention, including the impact of bail on detention lengths and case outcomes. The absence of comprehensive data hinders efforts to identify disparities and makes it nearly impossible to measure the effects of changes to the pretrial system. By mandating the reporting and analysis of pretrial data, this legislation seeks to:

- Highlight areas where the current system is failing and needs reform.
- Identify successful practices that can serve as models for improvement.
- Provide critical insights into the financial and social impact of pretrial detention.

IMPACT:

This bill would create a more transparent, accountable, and data-driven pretrial system. By shedding light on pretrial detention trends and disparities, the legislation supports informed decision-making that can lead to fairer pretrial practices, reduced unnecessary incarceration, and improved justice outcomes for individuals, families, and communities.

*In a recent poll,
80% of Minnesotans
support requiring
the state to collect
pretrial data.*

In Support of HF 1775

April 10, 2026

Dear Chair Scott and Members of the House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee,

The Legal Rights Center submits this letter in strong support of HF1775, which would dramatically increase criminal legal system transparency and support evaluation of current pretrial practices in Minnesota.

As one of four nonprofit public defense corporations in Minnesota, the Legal Rights Center annually represents hundreds of indigent Minnesotans facing criminal charges. Through this work, our attorneys see firsthand how the pretrial period of a criminal case can affect the outcome of that case. We know that clients who are detained pretrial are seriously limited in their ability to assist in their own defense. We see the way that pretrial detention or severe pretrial conditions can exert pressure on a person to plead guilty when they otherwise would maintain their innocence. And we understand that the race, income, and primary language of our clients impacts how they are perceived at bail hearings and the types of pretrial conditions that are imposed on them.

We know all of this because we work within the criminal legal system every day. But the system as a whole lacks transparency around pretrial issues. HF1775 will enable actors within and outside of the system to understand how the pretrial process works, its impacts on our communities, and what needs to change to achieve true equity and justice. Minnesotans deserve to know whether their legal system is working for them. For these reasons, the Legal Rights Center is proud to support HF1775.

Sincerely,

Malaika Eban

Executive Director



April 13th, 2026

Representatives Peggy Scott and Tina Liebling
Co-Chairs, House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Co-Chairs Scott and Liebling, and committee members,

Subject: Statement in support of HF 1775 3rd Engrossment

I am the public safety policy fellow with Center of the American Experiment, a position I have held for the past 4 years following a 33-year career in local law enforcement.

I write in support of HF 1775 which would mandate the collecting, analyzing, and annual reporting of a wealth of case and sentencing data. This data would be beneficial to policy makers in evaluating the effectiveness of policies governing pre-trial releases, risk assessment tools, bail/bonds, plea bargains, revocations of release status, and sentence types and length.

As a conservative who values a consequential criminal justice system (CJS), I recognize Minnesota's CJS has room for improvement, especially where failures to incapacitate offenders have led to additional offending. The data collected as part of this bill would help us assess the extent of that problem and direct us to policy weaknesses.

I am pleased to see the bill has been amended in the 3rd Engrossment to remove the pass through funding of non-governmental organizations to evaluate and report on the data, and instead directs the Sentencing Guidelines Commission to collect and make available to any research body withing 90 days of request. An additional improvement to the bill would be to make the data publicly accessible online.

Sincerely

David P. Zimmer

David Zimmer
Public Safety Policy Fellow
Center of the American Experiment



April 13, 2026

Representative Tina Liebling, Co-Chair
Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, Fifth Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Peggy Scott, Co-Chair
Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, Second Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairs Liebling and Scott:

On behalf of the Justice Action Network, a national bipartisan organization dedicated to advancing smarter justice policies that improve public safety outcomes and strengthen communities nationwide – which has advocated for evidence-based criminal justice reforms in Minnesota since 2016 – we write to express our support for HF 1775 (Pinto). This bill represents a straightforward, low-cost investment in the kind of transparency that sound policymaking requires – regardless of where one stands on criminal justice reform.

Effective policy must be grounded in evidence. Minnesota lawmakers currently make consequential decisions about the pretrial system without reliable statewide data to guide them. HF 1775 addresses that gap by creating a structured system for collecting, analyzing, and reporting information that courts and corrections agencies already possess. Critically, the bill does not require agencies to gather any new data – it simply ensures that existing information is organized, shared, and accessible to those responsible for shaping the law.

The bill also promotes meaningful accountability within the criminal justice system. By tracking bail decisions, pretrial outcomes, case dispositions, and sentencing alongside demographic and contextual factors, the annual report to the legislature will allow policymakers, researchers, and the public, to assess whether the system is operating fairly and effectively. This is not a mandate for any particular outcome; it is a commitment to transparency, measuring results, and reporting them honestly.

Data-driven pretrial policy has become a priority for states across the political spectrum. Without it, there is no objective way to assess system stress points, ensure adherence to best practices, or guarantee the appropriate use of public resources. Advancing HF 1775 is a common-sense decision that will improve the quality of Minnesota's justice system for years to come by ensuring that policy discussions remain grounded in facts rather than anecdotes.

We urge you to support this bill and work towards its passage to help create a more transparent, fair, and productive system for all Minnesotans.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Estrella López" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Estrella López, Senior State Policy Manager
Justice Action Network

C: Members of the House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota is an organization devoted to preserving the rights and liberties enshrined in our constitution and laws, and I am writing today to express our support for the Pretrial Data Bill HF 1775.

The Pretrial Data Bill will provide lawmakers, judicial system actors, and everyday Minnesotans with the information necessary to study the problems identified in Minnesota Justice Research Center's 2025 [report](#) on our state's pretrial practices, and to evaluate the efficacy and fairness of how the state treats people accused of a crime.

The Minnesota and U.S. Constitutions provide robust protections for all Minnesotans who are arrested and charged with crimes: People awaiting trial are protected from being assigned exorbitant bail amounts; from being deprived of liberty without due process; and from being treated differently under the law based on factors like wealth and race.

Currently, Minnesota lacks any comprehensive analysis of its pretrial data, and there is no public access to data reflecting monetary bail amounts, conditions of release, defendant eligibility for appointed counsel, and more. Without this data, we are unable to determine whether those rights are truly being protected. In addition, lawmakers, judicial system actors, and everyday Minnesotans are unable to answer foundational questions like: What is the relationship between monetary bail amount and bench warrants for failures to appear? What is the average bail amount for different charge types? What is the relationship between monetary bail amount and time spent in pretrial detention?

Despite gaps in existing and available data, we know that, on any given day, nearly 3,000 Minnesotans are incarcerated pretrial. The vast majority of them are jailed not because they are likely to be charged with another crime or fail to appear for court, but because they cannot afford the monetary bail amount the court has assigned to them. People living in Greater Minnesota are more likely to be jailed (and jailed longer) before their trials, and Black and Indigenous people suffer grossly disparate harms within the pretrial system.

The problems with Minnesota's current pretrial system are clear and well-documented. But without comprehensive pretrial data, we cannot fully study and understand the scope and impact of those problems. Furthermore, should the legislators ultimately decide to address the pretrial status quo, they will have limited tools to measure the effectiveness of their reforms.



All Minnesotans deserve a transparent and effective pretrial system. The Pretrial Data Bill is an important step in holding government agencies accountable and demonstrating what pretrial practices will promote public safety while protecting constitutional rights.

The ACLU-MN supports the Pretrial Data Bill HF 1775.

Regards,

Alicia Granse, ACLU-MN Staff Attorney



Minnesota Freedom Fund Action

P.O. Box 6077

Minneapolis, MN 55406

action@mnfreedomfund.org

Co- Chair Peggy Scott
Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives

Co- Chair Tina Liebling
Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives

Re: HF 1775 (Pinto) Criminal case information reporting required, and money appropriated.

Dear Chair Scott, Chair Liebling and Members of the Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee.

On behalf of Minnesota Freedom Fund Action, I write in support of HF 1775.

Minnesota Freedom Fund Action works alongside individuals and families navigating the criminal legal system every day. Through our Court Watch program and post-release support work, we see firsthand how pretrial decisions can vary widely across counties, courtrooms, and individual cases. These decisions have immediate and lasting consequences for people's ability to keep their jobs, care for their families, and meaningfully participate in their legal defense. Yet despite the significance of these decisions, Minnesota currently lacks a centralized system for collecting and analyzing statewide pretrial data. This gap makes it difficult for lawmakers, researchers, and policymakers to fully understand how the system is operating, identify patterns or disparities, and evaluate whether current practices are achieving fair and effective outcomes.

HF 1775 takes an important step toward addressing this challenge by requiring the collection and reporting of key information about criminal cases and pretrial decisions. The bill directs criminal justice agencies to report data to the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission, creating a centralized system that can help policymakers evaluate release practices, case outcomes, and broader trends across the state.

A transparent pretrial system benefits everyone. Better data allows policymakers to identify disparities, understand the impact of detention decisions, and ensure that resources are directed toward strategies that strengthen community safety. Without reliable statewide information, it is nearly impossible to evaluate whether current practices are working or how they might be improved.

The Pretrial Data Transparency Act is a commonsense step toward a more accountable and evidence-driven pretrial system. By improving transparency and making data accessible for analysis, Minnesota can make more informed policy decisions that uphold due process, strengthen public safety, and build a system that works for communities across the state.

Minnesota Freedom Fund Action respectfully urges your support for HF 1775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Matthias".

Danielle Matthias
Director of Policy & Advocacy
Minnesota Freedom Fund