



Members of the House Public Safety Committee,

The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota is an organization devoted to preserving the rights and liberties enshrined in our constitution and law.

We are writing this letter to urge members to oppose HF 2809.

The right to protest and meaningfully practice your right to free speech is the cornerstone of our democracy. The Constitution firmly protects this right even when protests spark anger or make people uncomfortable.

To prohibit protests outside of residential areas is restrictive and unnecessary. There are numerous reasons why people might want to protest outside of someone's home that would be perfectly understandable. Usually, the person being protested is a government official and their actions have a direct impact on the wellbeing of Minnesotans. It is also possible that protestors may simply march through residential streets and pass homes on their protest route.

If the concern is safety, members should know that we already have ample laws on the books to address demonstrations that get out of hand, including criminal charges. There is no need to further criminalize lawful protests.

This bill will not improve public safety but rather limit the free speech of Minnesotans and criminalize protesters.

We strongly urge you to vote against HF 2809.

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