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Jamie Becker-Finn (40B, DFL)
559 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-7153
E-mail: rep.jamie.becker-finn@house.mn.gov

RE: HF 1580 and The Minnesota District Judges' Association's 2023 Legislative Priorities

Dear Representative Becker-Finn:

The Minnesota Hispanic Bar Association ("MHBA") writes in support of your bill and the Minnesota District Judges' Association's ("MDJA") 2023 Legislative Priorities specifically regarding the recommendation of increasing district court law clerk starting salary.

Increasing the district court law clerk salary will increase the number of high quality applicants and incentivize clerks to stay with the judiciary for a longer period of time. Clerks assist the court in drafting orders in a way that allows all parties, including pro se parties, to understand the decision and the legal justification for that decision. Clerks also ensure that decisions are timely issued, allowing for efficient resolution of cases.

In addition, clerking is an excellent way for our attorneys to gain practical experience in the law. It provides an opportunity to understand how a judge views different legal issues and helps improve legal research and writing skills. Those practical experiences are beneficial to the attorney, clients, and the justice system long after a clerkship ends. However, the starting salary for a district court clerk when compared to student loans and starting salaries for other employers makes clerking a difficult option for many attorneys to consider.

Attorneys within the MHBA were encouraged that the MDJA and the Legislature recognize the importance of law clerks and the need to provide a competitive salary. We urge the Legislature to support HF 1580, the MDJA's legislative priority, of increasing the starting salary for district court law clerks.

Sincerely,

Roxanna Gonzalez
President, Minnesota Hispanic Bar Association