



March 25, 2022

Re: HF 3529 (Mental Health Data Sharing)

Dear Members of the House Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

The League of Minnesota Cities supports HF 3529. As law enforcement is receiving more and more mental health calls, the state law needs to provide them with the tools to respond effectively. The bill is the culmination of input from many stakeholders – including mental health providers, human services, community corrections, county attorneys, and law enforcement.

Data sharing during mental health calls

When a mental health call comes in today, the law allows for some mental health data sharing, but it is limited to “emergency interactions.” Since this term is not statutorily defined, it has been interpreted very narrowly. This narrow interpretation doesn’t allow law enforcement to get access information needed to use the proper strategies to address mental health calls.

HF 3529 would use “mental health crisis” as the threshold, which has a well-established statutory definition. This clarity will be helpful for mental health providers and law enforcement on when information can be provided to address mental health calls.

City policy representation on adult protection teams

Adult protection teams today are comprised of county human services, county sheriffs, and mental health providers to provide the best service possible for people with mental health needs. However, it is most often police officers who respond to mental health calls.

Adult protection teams are missing the on-the-ground information from police departments, and police departments are missing information that would be helpful when responding to mental health calls. For example, it would be beneficial if police officers were aware when a call comes in that they should engage a social worker or mental health provider *before* getting to the scene.

Working in data practices, the League appreciates that the legislature must balance the government efficiency of police work with the privacy of individuals (particularly as related to mental health data). We believe that this language does that. Therefore, we ask that you support HF 3529.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Irene Kao". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Irene Kao
Intergovernmental Relations Counsel