



CARLTON COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

317 Walnut Avenue, P.O. Box 530, Carlton, Minnesota 55718

Kelly A. Lake, Sheriff

February 14, 2020

RE: HF3155: Carlton County Proposal for Local Sales and Use Tax Authorization

To Whom It May Concern:

Hello. I am a lifelong resident of Northeastern Minnesota and a 30 year veteran law enforcement officer, serving the past 15 years as the elected Sheriff of Carlton County. As Sheriff, it is my first and foremost duty to ensure that the public safety needs of the residents and visitors to Carlton County are acknowledged and preserved. Critical to that effort is the maintenance of our local jail facility and the provision of effective and appropriate programming in conjunction with it. Unfortunately, the useful life of our jail facility is nearly spent. What follows is a summary of the efforts and challenges faced in our response to that reality.

1. The current Carlton County jail is over 40 years old, constructed in 1979 with an addition in 1981. Its linear design was outdated before it was even built, and it lacked reasonable programming space. It has been used well beyond its 25-30 year life expectancy. The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) issued a sunset letter dated January 28, 2020, for the jail, which states that as of July 31, 2023, the facility will no longer be authorized to hold incarcerated persons. The basis for the sunset includes, but is not limited to: the age and the style of the structure, a lack of programming space, and classification separation.
2. For the past five years, Carlton County officials have engaged in an extensive process for replacing or upgrading the current jail facility, including attending the National Institute of Corrections Planning of New Institutions training and completing two comprehensive jail studies. The planning process has included building an understanding of female offender incarceration and programming space needs at a local level.
3. Carlton County's female offender population has grown extensively, doubling in number during the last 12 years. This is an upward growth trend that is not unique to Carlton County, occurring regionally and in many jurisdictions statewide.
4. Carlton County and other leaders have identified a regional service gap for female offenders that does not exist for male offenders. Carlton County has made efforts to provide equal services to men and women incarcerated in the Carlton County Jail, but lack of programming space and the layout of the 40 year old jail facility has hampered those efforts.

5. Minnesota law requires parity in male and female offender programming:

Minnesota Statute Section 241.70: PROGRAMS FOR FEMALE OFFENDERS.

Subd. 1. **Type of programs.** Adult women charged with or convicted of crimes, and juvenile females charged with an offense that would be a crime if committed by an adult or adjudicated delinquent, shall be provided a range and quality of programming substantially equivalent to programming offered male

ADMINISTRATION
Phone: (218) 384-3236
Fax: (218) 384-9183

COMMUNICATIONS
Phone: (218) 384-9520
Fax: (218) 384-9426

CORRECTIONS
Phone: (218) 384-4560
Fax: (218) 384-9185

“This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Employer”



CARLTON COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

317 Walnut Avenue, P.O. Box 530, Carlton, Minnesota 55718

Kelly A. Lake, Sheriff

persons charged with or convicted of crimes or delinquencies. Programs for female offenders shall be based upon the special needs of female offenders.

Subd. 2. **Model programs.** Within the limits of money appropriated, the commissioner of corrections shall provide model programs for female offenders which respond to statewide needs and geographical areas and shall award grants for the programs. Listed in the order of importance, the programs shall:

- (1) respond in a rehabilitative way to the type of offenses female offenders generally commit;
- (2) respond to the problems of female offenders with dependent children;
- (3) respond to the importance of developing independent living skills;
- (4) assist female offenders to overcome their own extreme degree of dependency; and
- (5) prepare to offer technical assistance and training toward the implementation of other similar programs when requested by local communities.

Subd. 3. **County plans.** Counties shall annually submit a plan to the commissioner of corrections for approval which provides for services to female offenders in their area and which incorporates criteria for model programs established by the commissioner. Counties may agree to cooperate in preparing a joint plan and may submit and administer their plan jointly.

History: 1981 c 360 art 2 s 9; 1991 c 135 s 1

6. Carlton County has worked over the past 18 months to better understand the specific regional needs for female offender programming. County officials have received support for a regional female offender program from Chief Judge Sally Tarnowski on behalf of the 6th Judicial District, Fond du Lac Band Tribal Council Chairman Kevin DuPuis and other Band leaders, St. Louis County leadership, and Arrowhead Regional Corrections (ARC).
7. ARC, as a five county Community Corrections entity that includes Carlton County, does operate the North East Regional Corrections Center, a regional male-only program with 144 beds available. ARC does offer, through Duluth Bethel, a 10 bed Female Offender Program. However, that program is not sized to meet the regional needs for programming and services for female offenders, nor is the facility as secure as a jail.

As Sheriff, I believe public safety is paramount for the citizens and visitors of Carlton County, and it is my top priority. Furthermore, I am keenly aware of the costs associated with providing that public safety, and it is a cost that is borne almost entirely by the residents of Carlton County. Therefore, I believe it is critically important to provide those citizens with the opportunity to decide how they want to pay the cost of meeting their public safety needs while closing an identified service gap for female offenders in this region.

Sincerely,

Kelly Lake
Carlton County Sheriff

ADMINISTRATION
Phone: (218) 384-3236
Fax: (218) 384-9183

COMMUNICATIONS
Phone: (218) 384-9520
Fax: (218) 384-9426

CORRECTIONS
Phone: (218) 384-4560
Fax: (218) 384-9185

“This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Employer”