

To: Honorable Members of the House Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy Committee

From: Latonya Reeves, President, AFSCME Local 552

Subject: Support for H.F. 2900, COVID-19 Frontline Worker Pay

Date: February 8, 2022

Honorable Representatives:

My name is Latonya Reeves and I am the President of AFSCME Local 552 representing Hennepin County Probation and Parole Officers.

Our agents have been in the field, working closely with residents to meet the needs of our clients as well as the high public safety expectations of community. The Frontline Worker fund that is being proposed by Governor Walz, Representative Frazier, and Senator Murphy would be a start in recognizing the sacrifice these public employees have made to provide excellent services during this pandemic.

Our intensive supervised release agents, for example, have worked day in and day out, with no breaks in the service delivery model, to hold clients accountable to their conditions of the court and the Department of Corrections. Our high risk and neighborhood agents have had to meet clients where they are, whether it was their homes, places of business, or other community spaces, putting their health, and their family's health, in jeopardy in order to provide services for clients.

Their sacrifice made it easier for others to stay home. All of the agents that I represent went above and beyond on the front lines. They deserve to be compensated for that risk. This pandemic has left families shattered, people weary, children struggling with mental health and social isolation, and families trying to survive. Frontline workers have put all of these issues aside to show up for clients. We need those in our state legislature to recognize them and many others for continuing to show up.

Thank you for your consideration.

In Solidarity,

Latonya Reeves
AFSCME Local 552 President