



Dear Co-Chairs Novotny, Moller, and Members of the Committee,

Violence Free Minnesota, the coalition to end relationship abuse, writes today in support of HF 3496 as amended. Our coalition consists of over 90 member programs, who provide domestic and sexual violence services in every county in the state. This bill reflects a thoughtful approach to restitution and rehabilitation.

Restitution is about making victims and survivors whole. Victims, survivors, and their families often incur great costs related to their victimization, such as healthcare bills, funeral expenses, childcare expenses, and more. This economic harm to survivors and their families often perpetuates the circumstances that made the survivors vulnerable to abuse in the first place— poverty, housing instability, or economic dependence on an abusive person.

The amendment to this bill prohibits a person from getting supervision abatement status under the Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act if they have the ability to pay restitution but are willfully avoiding doing so. While a person without the ability to pay restitution who is otherwise succeeding on supervision may be rehabilitating as desired and should be eligible for abatement, the willful dereliction of restitution is not indicative of rehabilitation. By serving both the public's interest in effective rehabilitation and the survivor's interest in being made whole through restitution, this bill will help ensure safety and economic security for all Minnesotans.

We appreciate this effort and ask that you please support HF 3496 as amended.

Thank you,
Katie Kramer and Nikki Engel
Co-Executive Directors
Violence Free Minnesota