



January 9, 2023

Representative Ruth Richardson
Minnesota House of Representatives (52B)
Email: Rep.Ruth.Richardson@house.mn.gov

Dear Representative Ruth Richardson:

For 127 years, the National Medical Association (NMA) has been the the most trusted voice of Black physicians representing 50,000 Black physicians nationwide. The Minnesota Association of African American Physicians is NMA's statewide society. Our members include physicians and medical students of African descent who are focused on improving the health of communities of color, eliminating health disparities, and achieving health equity. As ground zero for the social uprising, we were a witness to the juxtaposition of policies and laws within Minnesota where Black children and adults are mistreated, abused, and neglected not only as individuals but collectively due to the failure of pubic service groups to protect our liberties and our bodies.

Black girls are treated as more mature than their developmental age. Black women are often over-sexualized and marginalized. These misperceptions are a direct result of a history of systemic racism within the criminal justice system that leads Black women and girls to be perceived as less important. The combination of the adultification of Black girls and the marginalization of Black women has increased their risk of being victimized by predators well aware of the inequities. When Black girls and women go missing their cases are not addressed in a timely manner, given sufficient resources, and their disappearances treated as criminal acts. The families of the missing Black girls and women are often burdened to perform the functions of law enforcement agencies. For these reasons, the members of the Minnesota Association of African American Physicians support HF 55 to establish and maintain an office dedicated to preventing and ending the targeting of Black women and girls. We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Minnesota representatives who are actively seeking to address this important issue of public safety.

Thank you very much for your work towards a healthy and just Minnesota.

Sincerely,
Dr. Dionne Hart
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President, Minnesota Association of African American Physicians
Region 4 Chairperson, National Medical Association

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