



March 24, 2022

***Sent via Email**

The Honorable Representative Schultz, Chair
Human Services Finance and Policy Committee
473 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for HF 3529

Dear Chair Schultz and Members of the Committee:

Olmsted County respectfully urges your support for [HF 3529](#) (as amended) to enhance the ability of local jurisdictions to communicate efficiently and respond effectively to calls for emergency services in their communities. Thank you for hearing the bill and thank you to Representative Wolgamott for serving as the chief author.

Olmsted County has implemented a co-response model to respond more effectively to calls for emergency service in the community related to public health concerns such as mental health, chemical health, substance abuse, and welfare/wellbeing. Since January 2021, preliminary data show that of the 952 calls the team responded to, 61% were mental health related and subsequently resolved in the field, avoiding a visit to the emergency room.

The program is yielding positive results, but local officials are finding that some data sharing laws are too limiting to offer needed assistance to clients. Olmsted County supports HF 3529 to better enable sharing of data among corrections departments, court systems, health and human services agencies, and other entities involved with cross-sector collaborative services. The bill language provides appropriate safeguards to allow data sharing in a way that improves the quality of service for the community without compromising private data.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation that will help local jurisdictions better respond and support community members in emergency situations. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Thein", with a long, sweeping underline.

Mark Thein, Chair
Olmsted County Board of Commissioners
thein.mark@co.olmsted.mn.us