



**HF 4282**

**March 18, 2026**

Chairs Novotny and Moller and members of the committee,

The Minnesota Justice Research Center writes to express concerns on HF 4282. Instead of limiting access to medications in jails, Minnesota should be expanding options to life-saving options.

Minnesota has witnessed far too many needless deaths in Minnesota jails. In addition, people on probation and parole have higher rates of mortality—about two times higher than the national average. From 2010 to 2019, 548 people released in Minnesota from prisons and jails died within one year of release. Drug overdoses accounted for a third of these deaths.<sup>1</sup>

While incarcerated, access to Medication Assisted Treatment can lower the chances of overdose, provide a period of stability, and connect people to addiction programs. However, a Minnesota survey from 2021 found that less than half of county jails offered this evidence-based programming.<sup>2</sup>

Incarcerated people have traditionally been excluded from Medicaid coverage. Now, as a result of bipartisan changes in federal law, Medicaid can pay for some services beginning up to 90 days before an inmate is released. Law enforcement and correctional leaders say this expansion of Medicaid has demonstrable benefits for the health and safety of incarcerated people and their communities. The National Sheriff's Association has endorsed tailored Medicaid services for people in jails and on supervision.<sup>3</sup>

The Larry R. Hill Act was a step in the right direction. Rather than rolling it back, let's build on it and save lives.

-Will Cooley, Policy Director, Minnesota Justice Research Center

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<sup>1</sup> Wildeman C, Goldman AW, Wang EA.(2019) Age-Standardized Mortality of Persons on Probation, in Jail, or in State Prison and the General Population, 2001-2012. Public Health Reports; Alexander.Hall, M. D. (2024, August 21). State opioid response grant. Minnesota Opioid Response.

<sup>2</sup> Minnesota Management and budget. (2021). Treating opioid use disorder for criminal-justice-involved

<sup>3</sup><https://www.naco.org/sites/default/files/documents/NACo%20NSA%20NACBHDD%20Inmate%20Waiver%20Proposal.pdf>