



March 16, 2026

Representative Kelly Moller, Co-Chair
House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, Fifth Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Paul Novotny, Co-Chair
House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, Second Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairs Moller and Novotny:

On behalf of the Justice Action Network, a national bipartisan organization dedicated to advancing smarter justice policies that improve public safety outcomes and strengthen communities nationwide – which has advocated for evidence-based criminal justice reforms in Minnesota since 2016 – we write to express our support for HF 1775 (Pinto). This bill represents a straightforward, low-cost investment in the kind of transparency that sound policymaking requires – regardless of where one stands on criminal justice reform.

Effective policy must be grounded in evidence. Minnesota lawmakers currently make consequential decisions about the pretrial system without reliable statewide data to guide them. HF 1775 addresses that gap by creating a structured system for collecting, analyzing, and reporting information that courts and corrections agencies already possess. Critically, the bill does not require agencies to gather any new data – it simply ensures that existing information is organized, shared, and accessible to those responsible for shaping the law.

The bill also promotes meaningful accountability within the criminal justice system. By tracking bail decisions, pretrial outcomes, case dispositions, and sentencing alongside demographic and contextual factors, the annual report to the legislature will allow policymakers, researchers, and the public, to assess whether the system is operating fairly and effectively. This is not a mandate for any particular outcome; it is a commitment to transparency, measuring results, and reporting them honestly.

Data-driven pretrial policy has become a priority for states across the political spectrum. Without it, there is no objective way to assess system stress points, ensure adherence to best practices, or guarantee the appropriate use of public resources. Advancing HF 1775 is a common-sense decision that will improve the quality of Minnesota's justice system for years to come by ensuring that policy discussions remain grounded in facts rather than anecdotes.

We urge you to support this bill and work towards its passage to help create a more transparent, fair, and productive system for all Minnesotans.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Estrella López". The signature is fluid and includes a stylized flourish at the end.

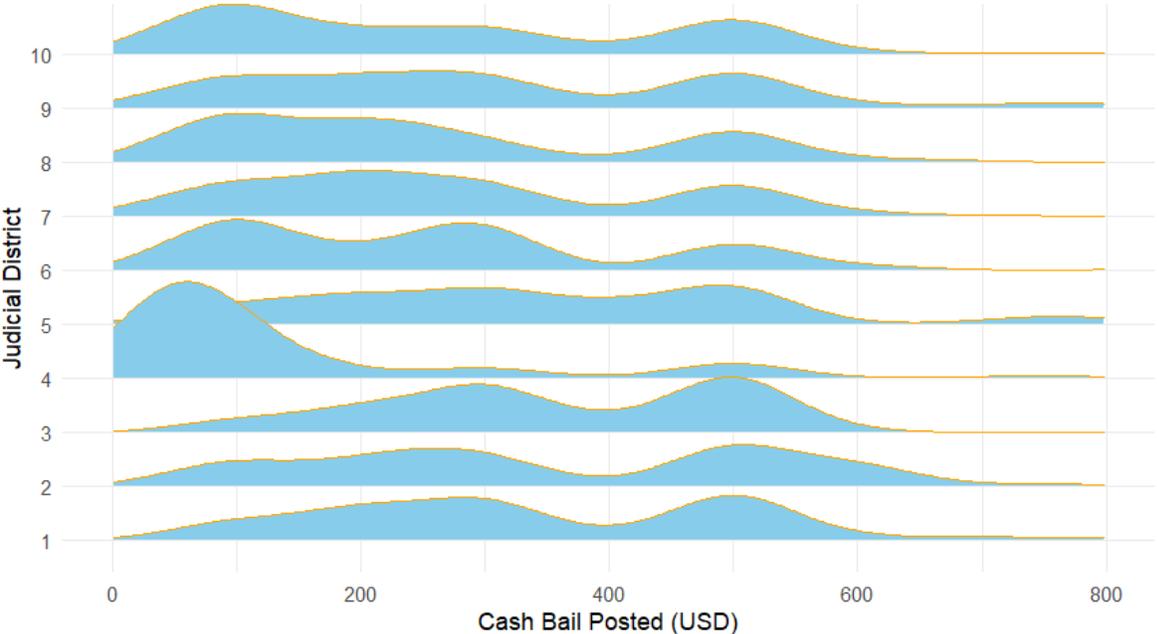
Estrella López, Senior State Policy Manager
Justice Action Network

C: Members of the House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee



for posted bail amounts, while districts 1, 2, and 3 skew towards higher amounts.

Figure 1: Ridge Plot of Posted Cash Bail by Judicial District



Data: 2018-2024 MN SCAO. Bail amounts are top-coded at \$800.

While this gives a glimpse of how case amounts vary across districts, it doesn't show what bail amounts are like for individuals, who can have multiple simultaneous bail amounts at the same time. A centralized data system would allow for more streamlined analyses of bail at the person-level to better understand the impact of the system.

Expanded data access is critical not only for evaluating the current system but also for ensuring that any future policy changes can be carefully studied and assessed.

As an organization committed to rigorous research and evidence-based policy, we respectfully urge members of the committee to support the passage of HF 1775.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,

Justin Terrell
Executive Director
Minnesota Justice Research Center



Minnesota Freedom Fund Action

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Co- Chair Kelly Moller
Pub. Safety Fin. & Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives

Co- Chair Paul Novotny
Pub. Safety Fin. & Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives

Re: HF 1775 (Pinto) Criminal case information reporting required, and money appropriated.

Dear Chair Moller, Chair Novotny and Members of the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of Minnesota Freedom Fund Action, I write in support of HF 1775.

Minnesota Freedom Fund Action works alongside individuals and families navigating the criminal legal system every day. Through our Court Watch program and post-release support work, we see firsthand how pretrial decisions can vary widely across counties, courtrooms, and individual cases. These decisions have immediate and lasting consequences for people's ability to keep their jobs, care for their families, and meaningfully participate in their legal defense. Yet despite the significance of these decisions, Minnesota currently lacks a centralized system for collecting and analyzing statewide pretrial data. This gap makes it difficult for lawmakers, researchers, and policymakers to fully understand how the system is operating, identify patterns or disparities, and evaluate whether current practices are achieving fair and effective outcomes.

HF 1775 takes an important step toward addressing this challenge by requiring the collection and reporting of key information about criminal cases and pretrial decisions. The bill directs criminal justice agencies to report data to the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission, creating a centralized system that can help policymakers evaluate release practices, case outcomes, and broader trends across the state.

A transparent pretrial system benefits everyone. Better data allows policymakers to identify disparities, understand the impact of detention decisions, and ensure that resources are directed toward strategies that strengthen community safety. Without reliable statewide information, it is nearly impossible to evaluate whether current practices are working or how they might be improved.

The Pretrial Data Transparency Act is a commonsense step toward a more accountable and evidence-driven pretrial system. By improving transparency and making data accessible for analysis, Minnesota can make more informed policy decisions that uphold due process, strengthen public safety, and build a system that works for communities across the state.

Minnesota Freedom Fund Action respectfully urges your support for HF 1775.

Sincerely,

Danielle Matthias

Danielle Matthias
Director of Policy & Advocacy
Minnesota Freedom Fund



March 16, 2026

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Dear Co-Chairs and members of the committee,

The Minnesota Justice Research Center (MNJRC) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to driving meaningful change to Minnesota's criminal legal system through rigorous and community-centered research, education, and policy development. We write in support of HF 1775, a bill that would require the collection of statewide pretrial data across systems in Minnesota.

A recent poll conducted in Minnesota found that 80 percent of Minnesotans support requiring statewide collection of pretrial data. This level of public support is not surprising. Over the past five years, MNJRC has conducted several in-depth studies on Minnesota's pretrial system and spoken with community members and system stakeholders across the state and country. Through this work, we have consistently heard that greater data transparency is needed.

Our research has found that Minnesota's current pretrial data system fails to meet basic standards for quality, transparency, and equity. In 2025, MNJRC issued a report to the Minnesota Legislature recommending the creation of a statewide pretrial data system. HF 1775 represents an important step toward that goal by requiring that pretrial data be transferred to a single agency responsible for housing the information and making it accessible to the public for further analysis.

Currently, data relevant to pretrial release and detention at the state level is primarily held by two agencies: the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the State Court Administrator's Office (SCAO). By requiring each of these agencies to report their data to a single centralized location and ensuring public accessibility, this bill would allow for more accurate and streamlined analyses beyond what MNJRC was able to complete during our legislative study. Our analyses with currently available data are ongoing. Figure 1 visualizes the distribution of posted cash bail amounts by Judicial District. This shows, for example, that the 4th judicial district skews towards lower amounts per case



OFFICE OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY ATTORNEY

John J. Choi

March 11, 2026

Co-Chair

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Co-Chair

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RE: HF 1775/SF 1908: Pre-Trial Data Bill

Dear Legislators,

I urge you to support HF 1775/SF 1908, a vital bill that would require Minnesota counties to annually report pre-trial data to the Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

Each year, more than 69,000 people are booked into local jails across Minnesota. Many of them remain incarcerated simply because they lack the financial means to pay bail, while others facing the same charges are released because they or their families can afford it. We can all agree that a person's liberty should not be determined by their wealth—or lack thereof. Before we can consider, let alone agree on, any reforms to the money bail system, we need a clear understanding of how it operates and impacts communities throughout Minnesota.

Currently, there is no centralized or standardized process for collecting the data necessary to evaluate our bail system. This lack of transparency hinders you, as lawmakers, from addressing its impact and prevents the public from forming informed opinions on the changes they want to see.

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In Ramsey County, I am proud of the work that I, alongside our Sheriff and County Manager, have led to improve jail data transparency. We now have a publicly accessible jail data [dashboard](#), a significant step forward. However, without uniform statewide data collection, this effort will have limited value for the rest of Minnesota.

HF 1775 is a much-needed step toward government transparency. It is critical for understanding a system with profound consequences for liberty and safety in every Minnesota community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Choi
Ramsey County Attorney

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REGIONAL NATIVE
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PROMOTING JUSTICE FOR NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE CRIMINAL COURTS

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March 16, 2026

RE: Letter in Support of the Pretrial Data Transparency Act (HF 1775)

Dear Co-Chairs Moller and Novotny, and committee members,

On behalf of the Regional Native Public Defense Corporation, I write to express our support of HF1775. Our organization represents and defends Tribal Member clients across Northern Minnesota, and we see firsthand how pretrial decisions affect individuals, families, and communities.

Many of our clients face barriers related to poverty, transportation, and access to services. When individuals are held in jail before trial simply because they cannot afford bail, it can lead to lost jobs, housing instability, and increased pressure to resolve cases quickly. These impacts are felt not only by the individual but also by their families and tribal communities.

Collecting consistent and reliable pretrial data will help policymakers better understand how the system is working, including how pretrial decisions affect Native people in Northern Minnesota. Greater transparency will support more informed decision-making and help move toward a fairer and more effective pretrial system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas R. Sorenson".

Thomas R. Sorenson, Programs Manager
Regional Native Public Defense Corporation
www.NativeDefense.org



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

Violence Free Minnesota, the coalition to end relationship abuse, and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) write today in support of HF 1775, a bill to help Minnesota collect data to understand the ways pretrial bail is being used in our state. Our coalitions represent over 100 programs who provide domestic and sexual violence services in every county in the state. This information is important to ensuring that our pretrial system is finely tuned towards public safety, without undue burden on liberty.

Survivors have a strong interest in state and local decisionmakers having accurate information about the pretrial bail process. Survivors of domestic and sexual violence come to the pretrial system with an extreme diversity of opinions: some want their abuser in jail until trial, others want them out as soon as possible; some feel pressured to post bail on behalf of an abusive partner, others couldn't do that even if they wanted to. But all survivors share one goal: they want the violence to stop.

Similarly, when we ask our member programs about the pretrial systems in their cities and counties, their experiences vary greatly. The mechanics of how conditions are determined, how bail is set, how effective victim notification occurs, and more change based on jurisdiction.

Carefully examining which of our pretrial systems are most effective at stopping violence is a priority for our coalitions. Given the wide range of survivors' opinions on the pretrial system, and the wide range of program experiences, our coalitions are always looking for more data to try to determine what will be safest for survivors. Safety planning and decisionmaking for survivors is always a highly individualized process, which must be taken on a case-by-case basis. But these individualized assessments are most effective when paired with accurate big-picture data.

Additionally, having a greater understanding of the efficacy of the different aspects of our pretrial system will help our advocates prepare survivors for what to expect when a criminal case starts. Survivors have a lot of unknowns when the person who hurt them gets arrested: When will they be released? What will the court make them do? Do I need to get my own Order For Protection? Am I safe now? This bill will help us, in a broad sense, start to answer those questions with more confidence.

For the foregoing reasons, Violence Free Minnesota and MNCASA are happy to support HF 1775 and ask for your support as well.

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

Ash Taylor-Gougé
Executive Director
MNCASA



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March 16, 2026

Dear Members of the House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota is an organization devoted to preserving the rights and liberties enshrined in our constitution and laws, and I am writing today to express our support for the Pretrial Data Bill (HF 1775/SF 1908).

The Pretrial Data Bill will provide lawmakers, judicial system actors, and everyday Minnesotans with the information necessary to study the problems identified in Minnesota Justice Research Center's 2025 report on our state's pretrial practices, and to evaluate the efficacy and fairness of how the state treats people accused of a crime.

The Minnesota and U.S. Constitutions provide robust protections for all Minnesotans who are arrested and charged with crimes: People awaiting trial are protected from being assigned exorbitant bail amounts; from being deprived of liberty without due process; and from being treated differently under the law based on factors like wealth and race.

Currently, Minnesota lacks any comprehensive analysis of its pretrial data, and there is no public access to data reflecting monetary bail amounts, conditions of release, defendant eligibility for appointed counsel, and more. Without this data, we are unable to determine whether those rights are truly being protected. In addition, lawmakers, judicial system actors, and everyday Minnesotans are unable to answer foundational questions like: What is the relationship between monetary bail amount and bench warrants for failures to appear? What is the average bail amount for different charge types? What is the relationship between monetary bail amount and time spent in pretrial detention?

Despite gaps in existing and available data, we know that, on any given day, nearly 3,000 Minnesotans are incarcerated pretrial. The vast majority of them are jailed not because they are likely to be charged with another crime or fail to appear for court, but because they cannot afford the monetary bail amount the court has assigned to them. People living in Greater Minnesota are more likely to be



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jailed (and jailed longer) before their trials, and Black and Indigenous people suffer grossly disparate harms within the pretrial system.

The problems with Minnesota's current pretrial system are clear and well-documented. But without comprehensive pretrial data, we cannot fully study and understand the scope and impact of those problems. Furthermore, should the legislators ultimately decide to address the pretrial status quo, they will have limited tools to measure the effectiveness of their reforms.

All Minnesotans deserve a transparent and effective pretrial system. The Pretrial Data Bill is an important step in holding government agencies accountable and demonstrating what pretrial practices will promote public safety while protecting constitutional rights.

The ACLU-MN supports the Pretrial Data (HF 1775/SF 1908).

Regards,

John Boehler
Policy Counsel, ACLU of Minnesota



March 16, 2026

Re: Letter of Support for (H.F. 1775/S.F. 1908)

Dear Chairs and Committee Members of The Minnesota House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee:

I am writing on behalf of The Advocates for Human Rights in support of H.F. 1775, which would increase transparency for pre-trial processes across Minnesota and improve pathways to better understand and address the safety needs for survivors of gender-based violence and our community as a whole.

At The Advocates for Human Rights, we work with human rights defenders across the globe to advocate for the rights of survivors of gender-based violence. As part of that work, we coordinate WATCH, a court monitoring program that observes criminal court proceedings involving charges relating to domestic abuse, sexual violence, or sex trafficking, as well as proceedings that involve a woman or gender diverse defendant. We observe the latter, as we know that the vast majority of incarcerated women and gender diverse individuals are survivors of gender-based violence, and that many of those survivors are prosecuted for issues stemming from abuse they have experienced. Through observation our hope is to better understand the legal system's response to survivors of gender-based violence regardless of how they intersect with the legal system; whether as a named victim in a case or as a survivor-defendant. Much of our observation takes place during pre-trial proceedings, a period in the legal process that has deep and potentially life altering implications for survivors. During these observations we see firsthand the serious need for accessibility to additional pre-trial data and the often-insurmountable hurdles to obtaining such information that currently exist.

Even as a group that is well positioned to collect information related to pre-trial proceedings, we confront many barriers and see a serious need for an intentional statewide pre-trial data collection protocol and review as outlined in H.F. 1775. It is highly challenging to capture accurate and full-picture pre-trial data from in-person hearings, which are often unpredictable in their scheduling, inconsistent in what information is shared, and spread across a vast geographical landscape. Even when in-person observation is paired with records research, the data is not sufficient to comprehensively analyze for survivor safety and equity in many areas related to pre-trial proceedings. Public records are limited, are missing pivotal race and gender information, and are not available in formats that allow for standardized analysis.

Having consistent, statewide data compiled across multiple system actors is essential to evaluate how bail, conditions of release, and case adjudications that impact survivors are being decided across jurisdictions and intersectionally with factors such as race and gender. To build a criminal legal system that better serves survivors in Minnesota we must be able to truly understand and assess the current system. Yet we cannot change what we cannot fully see. Data transparency is a first step in removing those blindfolds. We urge you to support H.F. 1775 as an important step towards building a criminal legal system that can provide true safety, equity, and justice for survivors of gender-based violence and all people throughout Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Anne Applebaum
Director of WATCH Advocacy & Programming
The Advocates for Human Rights



March 16th, 2026

Representatives Kelly Moller and Paul Novotny
Co-Chairs, House Public Safety and Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Co-Chairs Moller and Novotny, and committee members,

Subject: Statement in support of HF 1775 2nd Engrossment

I am the public safety policy fellow with Center of the American Experiment, a position I have held for the past 4 years following a 33-year career in local law enforcement.

I write in support of HF 1775 which would mandate the collecting, analyzing, and annual reporting of a wealth of case and sentencing data. This data would be beneficial to policy makers in evaluating the effectiveness of policies governing pre-trial releases, risk assessment tools, bail/bonds, plea bargains, revocations of release status, and sentence types and length.

As a conservative who values a consequential criminal justice system (CJS), I recognize Minnesota's CJS has room for improvement, especially where failures to incapacitate offenders have led to additional offending. The data collected as part of this bill would help us assess the extent of that problem and direct us to policy weaknesses.

I am pleased to see the bill has been amended in the 2nd Engrossment to remove the pass through funding of non-governmental organizations to evaluate and report on the data, and instead identifies a reasonable number of full time employees in the Department of Corrections and the Sentencing Guidelines Commission to collect, analyze, and report this data on a full time basis. An additional improvement to the bill would be to make the data publicly accessible online.

Sincerely

David P. Zimmer

David Zimmer
Public Safety Policy Fellow
Center of the American Experiment



March 16, 2026

Rep. Kelly Moller, Co-Chair
Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee
MN House of Representatives
Centennial Building, 5th Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Paul Novotny, Co-Chair
Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee
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Subject: Support HF 1775 Pre-Trial Data Bill

Dear Co-Chairs Moller and Novotny:

At Arnold Ventures, we are committed to maximizing opportunity and minimizing injustice through evidence-based policy. We invest in research to determine what works, then partner with grantees, stakeholders, and lawmakers to scale proven solutions.

With respect to public safety, states invest millions of taxpayer dollars to keep communities safe. Taxpayers deserve to know whether these investments actually reduce crime. The best way to ensure tax dollars are well spent is to rigorously evaluate whether criminal justice policies work. But we can't do that unless we collect the data.

While Minnesota collects significant data post-conviction, it fails to gather critical information at the front end of the system. The Pre-Trial Data Bill will help fill in the missing data gaps, allowing researchers to track public safety outcomes and investments.

Because we believe more data will help lawmakers make better policy, Arnold Ventures supports HF 1775.

Thank you,

Alyson Clements
Director of Advocacy

C: Members of the House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee

Dear public safety legislators and leaders,

I'm writing in support of the Pretrial Data Transparency Act (HF 1775). This legislation would strengthen transparency in Minnesota's pretrial system by requiring centralized collection of pretrial data through the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

As someone working for and representing incarcerated people and loved ones across the state it is clear to me that HF 1775 has broad legislative and community support, and would dramatically improve transparency and inform legislative solutions in the pretrial system.

Now is the time!

Lack of transparency is one of the biggest barriers to safety -- in all aspects of government. How can we know what's going on if we don't know what's going on? How do we know what's bringing safety or chaos outside of anecdotes if we don't have data? How do we solve problems if we can't even see what some of them are?

I personally believe that when we understand what's going on we can move on from trying to substitute harshness or compassion for effectiveness -- and start centering safety in our public safety decisions -- in our streets, homes, courts, prisons, and communities.

This bill is one important step in that direction. As someone working to dream up more safety solutions together, I hope you'll take this step, today, and to work and learn from and with you on many more tomorrow.

Thank you for all your work and may we continue to work for the Minnesota all of us deserve--

David Boehnke, co-Executive Director, Minnesota Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee, dboehnke@gmail.com 651-315-4222



A LAW FIRM OF AND FOR THE PEOPLE

In Support of HF 1775

March 16, 2026

Dear Chair Moller and Members of the House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

The Legal Rights Center submits this letter in strong support of HF1775, which would dramatically increase criminal legal system transparency and support evaluation of current pretrial practices in Minnesota.

As one of four nonprofit public defense corporations in Minnesota, the Legal Rights Center annually represents hundreds of indigent Minnesotans facing criminal charges. Through this work, our attorneys see firsthand how the pretrial period of a criminal case can affect the outcome of that case. We know that clients who are detained pretrial are seriously limited in their ability to assist in their own defense. We see the way that pretrial detention or severe pretrial conditions can exert pressure on a person to plead guilty when they otherwise would maintain their innocence. And we understand that the race, income, and primary language of our clients impacts how they are perceived at bail hearings and the types of pretrial conditions that are imposed on them.

We know all of this because we work within the criminal legal system every day. But the system as a whole lacks transparency around pretrial issues. HF1775 will enable actors within and outside of the system to understand how the pretrial process works, its impacts on our communities, and what needs to change to achieve true equity and justice. Minnesotans deserve to know whether their legal system is working for them. For these reasons, the Legal Rights Center is proud to support HF1775.

Sincerely,

Malaika Eban

Executive Director