February 16, 2023

Rep. Heather Edelson   Sen. Judy Seeberger
471 State Office Building   2109 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155   St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Edelson and Senator Seeberger,

We are writing in support of HF 1279/SF 1249 your bill to require the state to pay for costs incurred for medical examinations of a victim of criminal sexual conduct. Those costs currently fall on the county with a billing system for exams that is burdensome and inconsistent. Alignment on the cost of exams, and a central billing process would greatly reduce administrative burden for our teams and increase efficiency. Our focus should be caring for survivors of sexual assault, not on paperwork in an inefficient and fragmented system.

In 2022, the Hennepin Healthcare Assault Response Team (HART) completed 743 sexual assault exams. This team is specially trained to provide trauma-informed medical care and support for individuals who have experienced sexual assault, human trafficking or sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, and child sexual abuse. Our commitment to their needs extends from the services we provide directly to the resources and services our health and justice partners provide.

Our combined efforts require significant resources and financial burdens to ensure supports wrap completely around the survivors. Financial capacity should not be a barrier to offering survivors a robust services continuum. We need financial support from the state to obtain justice for the survivors of these crimes.

We urge legislative leaders to ensure this bill language finally passes in 2023. Thank you for your concern and care for survivors of sexual assault. We are always willing to be a resource on these issues, so please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions.

Sincerely,

Jennifer DeCubellis   Irene Fernando   DaWanna Witt
Chief Executive Officer   Chair   Sheriff
Hennepin Healthcare   Hennepin County Board of   Hennepin County
System   Commissioners