



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

Dear Mr. Chair and Committee,

Founded in 1985, the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) is a non-profit organization that is headquartered in Minnesota and has operations in the U.S., Africa and the Middle East. We extend rehabilitative care to survivors of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (CIDT); build the capacity of colleague torture rehabilitation programs and human rights defenders worldwide; and engage in advocacy aimed at ending torture and CIDT and supporting the rehabilitation of survivors.

At our projects in Minnesota, as well as those around the world, we help to rebuild the lives and restore the hope of people who were tortured for many reasons, including their sexual orientation and identity. Torture and conversion therapy are both designed to silence people, to strip them of their identities, and to instill fear in communities. We have seen the physical and psychological harm that occurs when families and communities attempt to repress sexual orientation, desire, and gender identities. Our clients are left without dignity and a sense of self and are further at risk for depression, anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, chemical dependency or suicide.

CVT supports HF 16 and urges the Committee to pass this important legislation.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

On behalf of CVT:

Peter Dross (Vice President of External Relations)  
Sara Nelson, MSW, LICSW (Psychotherapist)  
Charissa Cable, MSW, LGSW (Psychotherapist)