

May 1, 2023

Dear Chair Latz, Chair Moller and Members of the Public Safety and Judiciary Conference Committee:

On behalf of all residents of Ramsey County we want to thank you for your efforts to create a judiciary and public safety system that works for all Minnesotans. There is a lot to like in these bills.

**Ramsey County Youth Treatment Homes** – We are deeply appreciative that both bodies recognized the crucial need to create new options to help youth involved in the criminal justice system. We thank you for including SF 393/HF 600 in this omnibus bill. This proposal has the full support of the Ramsey County Board, County Attorney, and County Sheriff. Ramsey County is ready to pilot these community-based and culturally specific intensive treatment homes. Youth placed in these residential settings will receive intensive wraparound therapeutic services to address their needs.

These homes, developed in collaboration with community, will include continuous learning with and from these youth, their families, and service providers to improve the treatment and services we can provide to these young people. It is our hope that this work can serve as a model for future statewide efforts.

Equally important, and deserving of equal funding, is the appropriation for reentry support, family peer-to-peer support, respite options, and employment opportunities for these youth. These are things that our youth and families have been asking for and we see these efforts as essential to youth violence reduction in our community. We appreciate that both bodies included funding for these efforts, and between the House and the Senate proposals we prefer the House's position of ongoing funding. However, we continue to believe that funding for our communities and families is critically important, and we continue to request the full \$10 million that was in the original bill. Without full funding we will have to reduce the programming that community partners offer under this section.

**Community Supervision Funding and Formula Change** – We also appreciate the inclusion by both bodies of funding for community supervision and thank the legislature for recognizing the important services counties provide. 87 counties, 3 different probation delivery systems, and 1 formula that we all agree on, worked on with the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center.

\$57 million is needed to make the formula work, \$14 million more than currently proposed by these bills. Based on true workload study numbers, \$57 million is the lowest that will make this formula work and it is imperative that it include base funding for each county. The full \$57 million would allow us to remove probation fees. We could certainly use more, but this is the minimum we need to make this formula work and provide equitable, evidence-based services that every client deserves.

#### **Other Items**

There is so much good work for the future of Minnesota included in these bills. We support the proposed probation limit of five years in the House bill and well as the inclusion of prosecutor-initiated resentencing. We are very pleased to see language and/or funding in both bills to support background checks and red flag laws to

help ensure that guns don't get into the hands of dangerous individuals in our communities. And finally, we support increased funding for the BCA, particularly for the forensic lab and for violent crime enforcement. This important work has a direct impact on our county attorney's ability to prosecute these violent crimes in our community.

Thank you again for your work in service to the State of Minnesota. In the days ahead please feel free to reach out to us with any questions you may have or to ask for any assistance you may need. Your work is critical to the well-being of all Minnesotans, and we are proud to be your partner in these efforts.

Thank you,



Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo  
Ramsey County Board Chair  
Ramsey County Legislative Committee Chair



Commissioner Rena Moran  
Ramsey County Commissioner, District 4  
Ramsey County Legislative Committee Vice Chair

Cc: Governor Tim Walz, Speaker Melissa Hortman, Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic