



February 20, 2025

Chair Scott and Members of the Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee,

Americans for Prosperity believes that every American should have the power to speak, think, and act as they see fit, without hindrance from the government — as long as they're not violating the rights of others. Yet today we too often see resistance toward a culture of free expression. We are dedicated to protecting and preserving the First Amendment and stopping threats to free speech.

The government shouldn't be tracking and keeping lists of what people say—it's a direct threat to free expression and opens the door to censorship. To ensure Minnesotans can continue to think, speak, and debate freely, we urge you to support House File 768, which bars the Department of Human Rights from creating or maintaining a database of protected speech.

Past proposals in the state sought to establish government-run databases to monitor 'bias incidents,' which encompassed not just genuine threats but also constitutionally protected speech. Such databases can foster a culture of fear and self-censorship, where individuals hesitate to voice their opinions out of concern that they might be reported, monitored, or stigmatized for engaging in lawful speech.

When people fear being monitored or reported for their speech, they avoid open discussions, especially on controversial topics. This weakens public discourse by narrowing the range of viewpoints expressed, making it harder to challenge ideas and find common ground.

HF 768 will help to eliminate these risks by prohibiting the Department of Human Rights from tracking or incentivizing reports of protected speech. By preventing the creation of a government-run database to track speech, this bill removes the threat of state-sanctioned monitoring that could chill open expression.

We urge your support of HF 768, which is essential to keeping Minnesota a place where free expression is protected from government interference.

Sincerely,

*RaeAnna K. Lee*

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