



January 11, 2023

RE: Support for HF 55 Establishing an Office for Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls
Chair Moller and members of the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

I write in support of House File 55 to establish an Office for Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls. As the executive director of EdAllies, an organization that fights to remove the barriers to success and livelihood faced by students of color, I applaud this effort and am certain it will strengthen our communities.

In our work, we dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, elevate relevant and rigorous educational opportunities, and regularly address the issues faced by students from historically underserved communities. Time and again, we meet with families and students who experience inadequately and inequitably funded schools, educators who don't share similar backgrounds, and a dearth of high-quality school and curriculum options that would otherwise put students on a path to career and life success. Schools must also serve the most urgent needs of students with staff able to recognize a crisis and how to address it effectively.

If Minnesota hopes to meet the needs of all students, especially Black girls, we must be committed to addressing the urgent issues raised through this bill. This must include several strategies moving at once. An important foundation is sound data, which can be collected in student surveys that regularly measure the health and wellbeing of our students. Data, coupled with a plan centralized in the proposed office dedicated to preventing and ending the targeting of Black women and girls, has the potential to create healthier and safer learning environments - a foundation necessary for improved academic, social, and emotional success.

House File 55 has an important nexus to the work of EdAllies. Our vision for a state where every student succeeds in a rigorous and engaging education cannot be fulfilled when our Black women and girls are not safe.

Thank you, Rep. Richardson, for introducing this important bill. I look forward to supporting the passage of House File 55 and its implementation.

Respectfully,
Joshua Crosson
Executive Director