



**Minnesota Freedom Fund Action**

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March 3, 2026

The Honorable Paul Novotny  
Co-Chair, Pub. Safety Fin. & Policy  
Committee Minnesota House of  
Representatives  
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Kelly Moller  
Co-Chair, Pub. Safety Fin. & Policy  
Committee Minnesota House of  
Representatives  
5th Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Re: HF 2936 (Duran) Commissioner of corrections required to submit certain proposed rules for legislative approval prior to implementation.**

Dear Chair Paul Novotny, Chair Kelly Moller and Members of the House Public Safety Finance Committee,

On behalf of Minnesota Freedom Fund Action (MFFA), I write in opposition to Minnesota HF 2936.

MFFA supports policies that strengthen safety, due process, and dignity for people impacted by Minnesota's criminal legal system. HF 2936 would significantly undermine those goals by creating new barriers to implementing critical corrections standards, particularly those tied to health care, safety, and constitutional rights. At its core, this bill elevates cost concerns above human life and legal compliance.

Under HF 2936, if a rule adopted by the Minnesota Department of Corrections is projected to cost correctional facilities more than \$25,000 in its first year, the rule cannot take effect without express approval from the Minnesota Legislature. Facilities could use this to delay compliance pending that approval. In practice, this creates a pathway for counties and jail administrators to stall or avoid implementing standards designed to protect people in custody, effectively granting local facilities veto power over minimum safety standards whenever compliance carries a fiscal impact.

This is particularly concerning as Minnesota works to implement reforms that require jails to ensure continuity of prescribed medications, strengthen medical oversight and suicide prevention practices, and improve discharge planning, health standards, and accountability in and across local facilities. These reforms depend on clear, timely rulemaking that translates legislative intent into enforceable minimum standards. HF 2936 would allow cost objections to become a mechanism for delay, even when those costs are directly tied to meeting basic health and safety obligations. We should be accelerating reforms that prevent avoidable deaths, not creating new mechanisms that allow critical standards to be delayed.



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The bottom line is: Adding procedural barriers to rule implementation moves the state in the wrong direction.

Minnesota is facing an alarming rise in deaths in county jails, underscoring the urgent need for stronger oversight and enforceable statewide standards. When people die in custody, it reflects systemic failures in medical care, mental health response, and basic safety protocols. Each death is not an isolated incident, but a signal that existing safeguards are insufficient or are being applied inconsistently.

Public safety and constitutional compliance should not hinge on whether a county is willing to absorb implementation costs associated with providing medically necessary care. Continuity of medication, suicide prevention safeguards, and meaningful discharge planning are foundational protections that reduce preventable harm and liability while strengthening trust in our public institutions, yet this bill treats them as if they are optional enhancements. Our obligation to provide adequate medical care to our community members that are in custody is well-established, and fiscal inconvenience does not absolve the state of that duty.

HF 2936 shifts authority away from the agency charged with corrections oversight and places it into a political approval process that risks inconsistent application across the state. This undermines statewide standards and creates the potential for uneven protections depending on geography or budgetary priorities. People in custody should not experience differing levels of safety based on the county in which they have been detained.

Minnesota has taken important steps toward ensuring that people in custody receive adequate medical care and are treated with dignity. We urge you to reject HF 2936 and protect the integrity of corrections rulemaking and the health and safety of people in custody across our state. This moment calls for increased accountability and transparent standards, *not* additional obstacles to implementation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Danielle Matthias*

Danielle Matthias  
Director of Policy & Advocacy  
Minnesota Freedom Fund