

MN8
550 Rice St, 2nd Floor
Saint Paul, MN 55103

March 11, 2025

RE: Opposition to HF16

Dear Chair Novotny and Members of the House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition of HF16. HF16 will be detrimental to the public safety and betray the community trust in Minnesota. We urge the committee to reject this bill. We must protect all Minnesotans, which includes immigrants and refugees. The ability to have separation ordinances helps keep our communities safe and allows community values to be at the center of our policies.

My name is Kay Moua, Director of Programs at MN8, an organization that is working to keep Southeast Asian families and communities together. Since 2016, our organization evolved from a grassroots campaign formed by the families of 8 Cambodian Minnesotans who were advocating to protect their families and loved ones from unjust ICE enforcement.

Minnesota is home to one of the largest Southeast Asian refugee populations in the world. 2025 marks the 50th year since the U.S. military intervention in Southeast Asia, which caused the mass displacement of over 1.2 million Southeast Asian refugees resettling in the U.S. The U.S. dropped more than 2 million tons of bombs in Laos and Cambodia. We are here because the U.S. was there. As refugees and immigrants, all we have ever wanted is a peaceful and safe world. Refugees and immigrants have survived unimaginable violence. Detention and deportations are inhumane and reflect the cruel conditions of wartime. Deportation would mean sending refugees and immigrants back to these situations. Many refugees and immigrants came here with hopes and dreams for a better life.

A bill such as HF16 would deeply harm public safety by eroding trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities. Immigrants and refugees are a vital part of Minnesota's tapestry. HF16 would disrupt the workforce, economy, and society by deterring immigrants from essential industries such as healthcare, education, government offices, social services, and more. We have a moral obligation to uphold the dignity, rights, and safety of all people, creating a culture of justice and inclusion.

Many of our communities have chosen Minnesota as our home because Minnesota has always been a leader in the values of freedom, families, and taking care of our neighbors. We urge you to stand with all Minnesotans and embody the spirit of Minnesota.

Sincerely,
Kay Moua