

# **Minnesota Felony Murder Task Force - HF 3976 (Dehn)**

Companion bill: SF 3802 (Chamberlain)

**What is Felony Murder?** A legal doctrine that allows anyone involved in a felony to be charged with murder if a death occurs during the course of the felony, even if they did not intend to kill anyone.

## **Facts on Felony Murder**

- The felony murder rule has been abolished in every common law country but the U.S., including Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland and India.
- Ohio, Hawaii, Kentucky, Michigan, and Massachusetts no longer apply the felony murder rule.
- Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington limit the felony murder rule to the actual perpetrators of the homicide.
- Minnesota has one of the strictest felony murder rules in the country.

## **Task Force Bill on Aiding and Abetting Felony Murder in Minnesota**

- Establishes Task Force
- Effective 7/1/20 to 1/15/21 \*Report required on or before 1/15/21
- *Membership to Include:* Commissioner of Corrections, Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commissioner, Attorney General, State Public Defender, Violent Crime Coordinating Council, Minnesota Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Minnesota County Attorney Association, 2 Representatives of Victims Rights Advocacy Groups, Impacted person or family member

## **Task Force Duties**

- Collect & Analyze Data on relevant charges, convictions, sentences (currently, no departments track homicide convictions for murder vs. aiding and abetting murder)
- Review Relevant Statutes and State and Federal Case Law
- Receive input from impacted defendants, their family members and the families of victims
- Analyze benefits and unintended consequences of current laws
- Make Recommendations to MN Legislature by 1/15/21