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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2302

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
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INVESTIGATIONS & REGULATIONS

To Chair Kelly Moller,

I write to you today in support of HF 55, sponsored by Representative Ruth Richardson, which would create an office for missing and murdered Black women and girls in the state of Minnesota.

The data is clear: when a Black woman or girl goes missing, there are systemic barriers to them being found safely at the same rates as other Minnesotans. According to Rep. Richardson, the cases of missing and murdered Black women stay open on average 4 times longer than other Minnesotans, and Black girls are more likely to be classified as runaways than the victims of foul play. Black women and girls are also more likely to be the victims of sex trafficking and partner violence than other Minnesotans. This status quo is unacceptable.

The office proposed in HF 55 will take a multi-faceted approach to examining and addressing the disparities that Black women and girls face, including the roles that housing insecurity, food insecurity, and the media play in increasing this disparity. Additionally, the office will build infrastructure that will track cold cases of already missing and murdered Black women, recommend further action to the state legislature to address the crisis, and issue an annual report to track progress.

Critically, this bill has also shown that it has bipartisan support. During the last legislative session, it passed out of the House Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Finance and Policy Committee unanimously, by a vote of 18-0. This bipartisan mandate underscores the urgency with which this crisis must be addressed.

I urge you to support this bill, which would establish this badly needed office and move Minnesota closer to a state where everyone can feel safe in our communities.

Sincerely,



Rep. Angie Craig