



1/27/2023

Re: Reintegration Driver's License
House File 503 (Pinto) Senate File 577 (McEwan)

Dear Chair Hornstein, Chair Dibble and Committee Members:

My name is Marlin Meszaros I am the Program Manager at FreedomWorks. We are a reentry and recovery community in North Minneapolis. We serve approximately 140 men on any given day. Our organization was birthed from a need for dignified transitional housing for men transitioning from incarceration.

I personally am a person living in long-term recovery from substance use disorder and unfortunately have also experienced many years of incarceration due to my use. I personally know the difficulty in being released from incarceration with good intentions "to do the right thing" only to find that the cost of getting my drivers license reinstated was much more than I could afford which would then result in me returning to criminal behavior by driving illegally. That was usually my first step in eventually returning to incarceration.

My last release from incarceration was in April of 2018 this time I chose not to drive until I was legal, but it took me until October of 2020 to make that a reality. My drivers license reinstatement was by far the greatest obstacle I had to overcome. I was very fortunate in that I was able to secure housing where I work.

It's worth mentioning that the public transit system in the metro is one the hardest areas to remain in recovery. There is rampant drug and alcohol use at most transit centers and on many of the buses and trains. This is the place that many of our participants have slipped in their recovery and transition from incarceration. This bill would be a great benefit to public safety by easing barriers to driving legally and achieving and maintaining employment.

Thank you,

Marlin Meszaros
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