

April 4, 2025

Representative Zach Stephenson  
Chair, House Public Safety Committee  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Paul Torkelson  
Chair, House Public Safety Committee  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Stephenson, Chair Torkelson, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), I would like to express my support for House File 3006, which addresses the Department's critical budget shortfall for fiscal year 2025.

The DOC is requesting \$9.1 million from the state's general fund and legislative approval to reallocate \$10 million in appropriated funds. These funds are necessary to ensure the continued operation of our facilities, maintain essential staffing levels, and uphold the public safety services we provide.

The DOC has made significant progress in recruiting and retaining staff, achieving a staffing level of 99% in 2025, up from just 76% in 2020. While these improvements are crucial, they have placed significant financial pressure on the department. Historically, we have relied on vacancy savings to cover budgetary needs, but this is no longer viable with most positions now filled.

Without the requested funding, the DOC faces severe operational challenges that may include implementing lockdowns to reduce staffing and curb overtime costs—measures that would undermine safety and rehabilitation efforts.

I urge your support of House File 3006 to ensure the continued safe operation of our correctional facilities and the effective delivery of services. Thank you for your consideration of this critical request.

Sincerely,



Paul Schnell  
Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Corrections