



MINNESOTA ASIAN PACIFIC  
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
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**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY**

(c/o Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, [rep.jamie.becker-finn@house.mn.gov](mailto:rep.jamie.becker-finn@house.mn.gov))

February 15, 2023

Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
559 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Re: *Letter of Support – HF 1580***

Dear Committee Members:

The Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association (MNAPABA), which seeks to represent the interests of more than 500 Asian Pacific American (APA) attorneys, judges, and law students in the State of Minnesota, provides this letter in support of HF 1580, which supports a pay increase in the 2024 and 2025 fiscal years for judicial law clerks and staff.

The benefits of a judicial clerkship position are well known in the legal community. Young attorneys gain valuable legal experience, mentorship from judges, and increased marketability that determines their career trajectories. Judges gain the assistance of skilled young attorneys; without judicial law clerks, judges would neither have the time nor the resources to perform their duties.

The current starting salary for a judicial law clerk is \$57,712, a salary far below the estimated entry-level compensation for a public law position. Such a low salary requires applicants to weigh the benefits of a clerkship against the sacrifice in pay, all while managing growing law school debt and a rapidly increasing cost of living. This low starting salary also disparately impacts students and attorneys of color, many of whom come from historically lesser means and would have difficulty working as a judicial law clerk without the aid of a high-earning spouse or a second job. This makes it not only challenging for judges to recruit and retain talent in general, but it also makes it very difficult for judges to recruit and retain diverse talent. The presence of diverse talent in the Judicial Branch is critical, as the lack of it can negatively impact the administration of justice and the public's trust in the legal system.

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An increase in judicial law clerk salaries to market rates can only benefit our justice system by helping to attract the best and brightest among our next generation of legal talent. More importantly, a higher starting salary will help judges recruit talent that looks like the communities they serve. For these and the foregoing reasons, the Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association supports a fair increase to judicial clerkship salaries.

Thank you for your consideration of HF 1580. We greatly appreciate your support of our organization and the voice we lend to this process on behalf of all of our members.

Respectfully,

**Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association**

By: /s/Christopher H. Jison  
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President