

March 27, 2023

Dear Chair Moller and Members of the House Public Safety Committee:

On behalf of all residents of Ramsey County we want to thank you for your efforts to create a public safety system that works for all Minnesotans. There is a lot to like in this bill.

Ramsey County Youth Treatment Homes – We are deeply appreciative of the inclusion of HF 600, a proposal that works to address and prevent youth violence in our community. This proposal has the full support of the County Board, County Attorney, and County Sheriff. Ramsey County is ready to pilot these community-based and culturally specific intensive treatment homes. Youth placed in these residential settings will receive intensive wraparound therapeutic and social services to address their needs.

These homes, developed in collaboration with community, will include continuous learning with and from these youth and their families and service providers to improve the treatment and services we can provide to these young people. It is our hope that this work can serve as a model for future statewide efforts.

Equally important is the ongoing funding for reentry support, family peer-to-peer support, respite options, and employment opportunities for these youth. These are things that our youth and families have been asking for and we see these efforts as essential to youth violence reduction in our community.

Local Government Emergency Management – We appreciate the funding support for emergency management activities at the local level. Ramsey County works with our local municipalities, neighboring counties in the metro region, private and non-profit organizations and state and federal partners to better prepare for, respond to and recover from incidents ranging from tornadoes to terrorism. We are also committed to the preparedness of our whole community. This includes working with community groups and leaders, businesses and individuals across the diversity of Ramsey County to enhance our combined disaster resiliency from the ground up. We appreciate the committee's investment in these efforts.

Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing - We thank the committee for the inclusion of legislation to enable prosecutors to initiate a motion to the court to reduce a person's sentence based upon their success in programming, abiding by conditions of supervised release, furthering their rehabilitation, and/or other factors that have subsequently reduced the person's risk for recidivism or indicate that a sentence reduction is in the interest of justice.

Pretrial Release Study – We support the committee's investment in reviewing the use of bail as a condition of pretrial release. Leaders from Ramsey County and local justice reform organizations created the Bail Reform Working Group in 2019, focused on collaborating to achieve a shared vision of

pretrial justice for our community. These efforts are ongoing and we hope they can inform this statewide study.

Firearms Safety – We appreciate the committee’s dedication to community safety by including legislation related to universal background checks and setting reasonable limitations on individuals determined to be a danger to themselves or the public when in possession of a firearm.

Community Supervision Funding and Formula Change – We appreciate the inclusion of funding for community supervision in the bill and thank the committee for recognizing the important services counties provide. We would ask for consideration of including the full \$83 million appropriation that was requested by the Association of Minnesota Counties, based on research and data gathered over the course of two years. We also ask for consideration of the formula change in HF 1838 to fix a long-standing problem with probation funding and provide equitable distribution of funding throughout the state.

Thank you again for your work in service to the State of Minnesota. In the days ahead please feel free to reach out to us with any questions you may have or to ask for any assistance you may need. Your work is critical to the well-being of all Minnesotans, and we are proud to be your partner in these efforts.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trista MatasCastillo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo
Ramsey County Board Chair