



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

March 15, 2023

Dear Madam Chair and Committee:

Founded in 1985, the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) is a non-profit organization that is headquartered in Minnesota and has operations in the U.S., Africa and the Middle East. We extend rehabilitative care to survivors of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (CIDT); build the capacity of colleague torture rehabilitation programs and human rights defenders worldwide; and engage in advocacy aimed at ending torture and CIDT and supporting the rehabilitation of survivors.

Our Healing, Incarceration, and Policing Program advocates for legislation that uplifts and supports our clients and communities in Minnesota, while increasing equity and accountability in our public safety infrastructure. Our work at CVT encompasses total and holistic healing; which allows people not only to survive, but thrive. In that spirit, we support HF 2023, the Clean Slate Act.

When a person finishes their interaction with the legal and/or carceral systems, they have either been released because they have served their sentences, the charges against them have been dismissed, or they have been found not guilty. People should not have to experience additional punishment on top of serving a sentence, and should not be punished if they are found to have done nothing wrong. Under our current system, this is exactly what happens. Overtime, people with records find it harder to secure stable housing and employment. We see the consequences of unstable housing and finances across our state; resulting in increased recidivism rates, while damaging the health and well-being our people with records and their families. Automatic expungement is a system that prioritizes rehabilitation and moving forward. It allows people and communities to not just survive, but thrive. It is an important step for Minnesota's public safety, and should be a priority this session.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

On behalf of CVT:

Ta'Mara Hill, Policy Officer  
Healing, Incarceration, and Policing Program