



March 11, 2025

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Chair Novotny and Members of the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota State Capital, Room 120
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN. 55155

Dear Chair Novotny and Members of the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

Thank you all for your leadership and public service for our State – I and all of us here at The Link greatly appreciate it! I am writing this letter on behalf of The Link and the youth and families that we provide support, emergency shelter and housing for. The Link is a nonprofit that provides crisis intervention, supportive services, emergency shelter and housing for youth and young families who are experiencing homelessness or who have been victims of sex trafficking. We also provide five juvenile justice alternative programs.

We were recently made aware that there is a bill (HF16) that would create concerning and dangerous situations for our community along with the youth and families that we support. This bill would mandate that our local police departments and county sheriffs provide immigration enforcement. This proposed change of role for our police department would create barriers and fear between community members and law enforcement. Right now our local police departments are important partners in our work to support victims of crime, investigate crime and help bring the perpetrators to justice. If their focus has to change from this critical role to a new role of immigration enforcement – the concerns are many including 1) immigration enforcement would take away time from already understaffed police departments from responding to crimes (active shooters, sex trafficking, rapes, etc.) where we need them to; 2) members of our immigrant communities would be afraid to report crimes to law enforcement for fears of being detained or deported therefore crimes would go unreported, investigated and prosecuted; 3) members of immigrant communities would be afraid to come forward as witness of crimes making it more difficult to find and hold perpetrators of crime accountable.

I have worked with many victims of terrible crimes over my career – sex trafficking, sexual assaults, domestic violence, kidnappings and shootings – we absolutely need our law enforcement partners to help us respond to crimes, support victims and investigate crimes. This bill proposes changing their role away from this and we are in strong opposition to this for many reasons and urge you to vote against HF16.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Beth Holger
CEO of The Link