



Public Testimony Judiciary Finance and Civil Law

Re: Support for the inclusion of HF833 in the Judiciary Omnibus Bill

Tuesday, March 5, 2022

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Good morning and thank you to the Chair, Vice-Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Kendal Takeshita and I am a Macalester Student and a Capitol Pathways Intern for the Coalition of Asian American Leaders (aka CAAL). I am also a board member of Minnesota's Japanese American Citizen League.

I chose to intern at CAAL because of both its dedication to the community and its expertise in advocacy. Throughout my term, I have seen CAAL act as a beacon of hope for many people through their events and workshops.

I was particularly moved by hearing a CAAL leader testify for Post-Conviction Relief at their annual Asian Minnesotans at the Capitol event. On this day, a spouse and mother bravely stood in the Capitol pleading for legislators to recognize the injustice her family was experiencing. Her husband, a longtime Minnesota resident who came to the U.S as a refugee child under the U.S.-Vietnamese humanitarian resettlement program, made a mistake at the age of 18 which led to his involvement in the criminal court system.

*Perplexed by this system they followed their attorney's advice to plea for a 6 months sentence to boot camp. He later discovered that boot camp was not an option and was forcefully funneled into the immigration system. This family was wronged by the criminal justice system and should have the **opportunity to seek justice**. House File 833 for Post-Conviction Relief, would provide this family and many others with an **opportunity to seek justice**.*

I connected personally with this story because, during WWII, my family was wrongly placed in internment camps against their will without any opportunity to seek justice. The impacts and trauma of my family's unjust incarceration span generations. We need to end these injustices from reoccurring, and House File 833 is an important first step toward a more equal justice system.

*I would once again like to thank the committee members for their due diligence in prioritizing the needs of Asian Minnesotans during these difficult times and correcting mistakes in our justice system that will allow individuals to seek relief from a wrongful conviction regardless of how much time has elapsed. **I ask that you include house file 833 for Post-Conviction Relief into the judiciary omnibus bill. Thank you.***