



OFFICE OF THE WINONA COUNTY ATTORNEY

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**Testimony By Karin L. Sonneman-Winona County Attorney and MCAA Treasurer
Before the State Government Finance and Elections Committee Regarding the
MN Attorney General's Supplemental Budget Request**

By Zoom- February 17, 2022 at 8:30 AM

Chair Nelson and Members of the Committee:

Good morning! I'm Karin Sonneman. I've served as the Winona County Attorney since 2011. I also Chair the Winona County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

Prior to being County Attorney, I served as an Assistant Public Defender for 20 years covering Winona, Houston, Wabasha, Fillmore, and Olmsted counties in the 3rd Judicial District.

I have been on the Board of Directors of the Minnesota County Attorneys Association for the past 10 years, and I currently serve as its Treasurer.

You received letters from many of my County Attorney colleagues, including MCAA President and Carver County Attorney Mark Metz, expressing their support for the AG Office's Supplemental budget request.

We speak as one voice on this matter because this supplemental funding request is so critical to the effective prosecution of criminal cases across the state, particularly so in Greater Minnesota, where many County Attorney Offices have **only** one, two, or three attorneys.

Supplemental funding for the AG's Office will help all County Attorneys deliver justice across the state, especially in the prosecution of complex, serious, and otherwise unique cases we are not equipped to handle alone.

Under the leadership of Attorney General Ellison, I have seen first-hand, on multiple occasions, the return of the AG's Office as an effective resource and partner that County Attorney offices can count on, once again, to help us, not just in criminal prosecution, but also in civil law matters.

By supporting the AG Office's supplemental budget request, you will be making a smart investment in public safety in the communities each of you and your colleagues in the Legislature, represent,

in the place where it matters most and provides the biggest bang for the buck: at the local level, in your home district.

Thank you for your time today.

Please contact me if you would like further information.