



MINNESOTA
CHILDREN'S
ALLIANCE



VIOLENCE FREE
MINNESOTA
THE COALITION TO END RELATIONSHIP ABUSE



May 11, 2022

Members of the Public Safety Policy and Appropriations Conference Committee
Via Electronic Delivery

Re: S.F. 2673 Conference Committee – Increased Funding for Crime Victim Services

Dear Conference Committee Members:

Minnesota's 6 crime victim service coalitions write to reiterate our request and need for an increase in base funding for crime victim services. These badly needed funds allow crime victims to access the services and support they need to care for themselves and their children.

Together, Violence Free Minnesota, the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, the Minnesota Alliance on Crime, Mending the Sacred Hoop Coalition, and the Minnesota Children's Alliance represent over 200 programs and individuals providing services and advocacy to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and general crime across the state of Minnesota. Crime victim services have not received an increase in base level state funding in over 7 years.

We are supporting the Governor's proposed budget increase for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) of \$12.5 million for fiscal year 2023 and \$17.5 million base level increase for fiscal years 2024/2025.

It has been repeatedly noted in the conference committee that our state and nation has been experiencing a rise in crime. Our advocacy programs report record numbers of victims seeking services. Many of those who reach out for services are reporting more severe violence, complex family needs, and increased mental health issues. It is critical we recognize and provide adequate funding for programs that serve victims and survivors of crime - while at the same time your attention is also focused on funding and improvements to law enforcement, victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence have a myriad of needs that extend far beyond the criminal legal system. They need access to medical care, housing, childcare, food, and transportation. They need help with counseling and emotional support, as well as assistance in navigating the complexities of our government support systems.

Our member programs have demonstrated they are uniquely suited to provide crime victim services. Our work has a direct and immediate impact on the public safety of Minnesotans, and we urge your support for an increase in base funding for crime victim services.



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Your continued commitment to prioritize the safety of victims and their children in communities across Minnesota is appreciated and needed at the end of this important legislative session.

Sincerely,

Guadalupe Lopez
Executive Director
Violence Free Minnesota

Artika Roller
Executive Director
MN Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Bobbi Holtberg
Executive Director
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Nicole Matthews
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