

HENNEPIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 9, 2023

Via Email

Senator Ron Latz
Chair, Judiciary and Public Safety Committee

Re: Support for SF 1507 (Mitchell) – Prohibiting Intimidation of Election Officials

Dear Chair Latz:

I am writing to express support for SF 1507, a bill to prohibit intimidation of election officials and interference with the performance election administration duties. As the county with the largest number of voters in the state, the protection and safety of our election administrators, staff, and election judges is a top concern. And protecting the safety and integrity of our election equipment and voter information is paramount to maintaining the most basic of constitutional rights – the right to vote. This bill will provide much needed protections for these elections officials, puts in place penalties and remedies for violating these protections, and provides funding to enforce the law.

Hennepin County elections staff, like those in many other jurisdictions in Minnesota and across the country, have been subjected to harassment and intimidation and have faced interference or attempted interference with election operations. And attacks on and threats to election officials are increasing across the country as has been well documented over the last few election cycles. In some municipalities, these threats are so violent and so serious that election officials have taken to wearing body armor to work or even quit their jobs out of fear for their safety or the safety of their families. Hennepin County has added extra security measures at its election department offices to help protect our workers and equipment, but we feel that this legislation will provide an additional level of deterrence and consequences for those who choose to violate the law.

Thank you, and I urge you to vote for SF 1507 and provide these needed protections for our election officials.

Sincerely,



Irene Fernando, Chair
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