

**March 21, 2024**

Senator Ron Latz, Chair  
Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee  
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3105  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Support for SF 4245**

Chair Latz and members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee,

The Policing Project at NYU School of Law thanks you for the opportunity to submit this letter in support of SF 4245, sponsored by Senator Oumou Verbeten. The Policing Project was created in the belief that one of the best ways to ensure transparent, effective, and ethical policing is for the public to be democratically engaged in setting expectations for police practices *before* police act, instead of *after* something has gone wrong.<sup>1</sup> This kind of inclusive, forward-looking policymaking is only possible when lawmakers and the public are fully informed about current police practices and their results. SF 4245 is an important step towards ensuring that communities and policymakers have the information they need to craft effective, informed policies about police stops.

SF 4245 will require that during every stop of a motorist, pedestrian, or cyclist, law enforcement officers must collect data about the basis for the stop, demographic information about the person stopped, information about the officer making the stop, and the outcome of the stop. The bill further requires law enforcement agencies to submit their stop data to a state agency annually; the state agency would then publish a report of the data (which would protect officer identities) and later analyze the data for information about disparities, effectiveness of stops, and other patterns. Importantly, the bill includes mechanisms to ensure that law enforcement agencies comply with their data collection and reporting requirements.

The data collection and publication required by SF 4245 would have significant benefits for public safety in Minnesota. With this data, law enforcement agencies could make evidence-based decisions about the most effective way to deploy their limited resources, focusing on the stops that are likeliest to make state roadways safer. In one New England town, for example, after data demonstrated that nearly 40% of traffic stops were for defective lighting, the department reallocated its resources to focus more on true safety stops. Police caught 3.5 times more intoxicated drivers the following year.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, studies indicate that simply collecting data can spur change. For example, in the 20 years that Connecticut has collected comprehensive stop data, each year fewer law enforcement agencies demonstrate statistical biases in their stop rates.

At least 23 states, including Alabama, Montana, and Texas, require law enforcement agencies to collect and publish information about police stops – but Minnesota lags its sister states in this regard. In contrast, some of Minnesota's largest municipalities, including [Minneapolis](#), [Saint Paul](#), and [Duluth](#), have all have taken affirmative steps to collect and publish stop data, in recognition of the significant public benefit of doing so. Importantly, data from each of these law enforcement agencies demonstrates significant racial disparities in stops.<sup>3</sup> But even more critically, the data give these agencies the tools necessary to improve these outcomes. For example, this data enabled Ramsey County to implement an extremely effective policy limiting certain low-level stops, which has made headway in [reducing disparities](#). Minnesotans across the state deserve to have access to the same breadth of information and the resulting effective solutions.

We thank the Committee and the Chair for their consideration of this bill, and urge members to support its important data collection, transparency, and enforcement provisions.

Sincerely,

Kelly McConney Moore  
Deputy Director of Legislative Initiatives

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<sup>1</sup> The Policing Project has created a number of model policies, all of which are informed by best practices in existing legislation and vetted by an advisory committee consisting of law enforcement officials, academics, police reform experts, and impacted community members. [Our comprehensive model statute on police data collection and transparency](#) was vetted through this process and it forms the basis of our testimony today.

<sup>2</sup> The change in policy also [greatly reduced the town's racial disparities](#) in its traffic stops.

<sup>3</sup> In the first quarter of 2021, Minneapolis officers were [29 times more likely](#) to search Black drivers during a low-level traffic stop than white drivers.