



March 18, 2024

Chair Moller and Members of the Minnesota House Public Safety Committee

Re: Letter of Support for HF 3991

Dear Chair Moller and Members of the Committee:

Violence Free Minnesota, the coalition to end relationship abuse, and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault write jointly to support House File 3991. This bill helps ensure that children who become involved in the justice system are given the best chance to grow up with a sense of opportunity and community support by providing alternatives to cash fines and restitution, and creating a space for restorative practices.

Restorative justice practices with youth are shown to be effective tools at preventing future criminal activity. Providing these opportunities for young people helps invest them in community at a younger age, and serves to prevent future crime.

Additionally, eliminating financial hurdles to restorative justice helps children and families who cannot afford cash penalties to meet their restitution requirements and move forward after a crime has been committed. We know that children and families experiencing poverty are most negatively impacted by the juvenile justice system, and that the current systems often exacerbate existing problems, leading to a continuation of the cycle of violence. We appreciate that the crime victim reimbursement portion of the bill places the burden on the Office of Restorative Practices, rather than the individual child. The Office of Restorative Practices is a more reliable way for crime victims to be repaid, and lessening financial impact on the offending child is likely to contribute to their ability to start life fresh and debt-free as an adult.

Our coalitions support providing additional options for both children and families as well as victims/survivors of violence to seek restoration and healing. We ask that you support House File 3991.

Thank you,

Guadalupe Lopez
Executive Director
Violence Free Minnesota

PaHoua Vang
Executive Director
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault