

April 23, 2025

Chair Marty and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Judiciary and Public Safety appropriations omnibus (SF 1417). Since civil rights laws are foundational to the state of Minnesota, the Department of Human Rights appreciates Chair Latz and the Senate Judiciary & Public Safety Committee prioritizing funding for the agency's base budget for the biennium. However, MDHR is concerned that the operating adjustment included in SF 1417 does not reflect the operating adjustment outlined in the Governor and Lt. Governor's budget and is insufficient to meet agency obligations.

MDHR is a people-powered agency, and it is the talented team within our department that brings the Minnesota Human Rights Act to life every day. MDHR is navigating a substantial increase in its workload, and it is important that the agency can continue to ensure that every Minnesotan is protected by, and benefits from, our state civil rights laws, as required by statute.

The operating adjustment is intended to address the rising employer-paid health care contributions, salary and compensation-related costs, IT services, and other direct operating costs – all essential to fully supporting this team.

MDHR is tremendously grateful to Chair Latz and the other members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee for their ongoing support of the department, as well as civil rights more broadly. This support is especially critical as MDHR anticipates a potential further increase in caseload as the federal administration continues to defund and deprioritize federal civil rights enforcement mechanisms within the U.S. Department of Education, Department of Justice, Social Security Administration, and beyond.

Please contact me or Nico Bauer ([nico.bauer@state.mn.us](mailto:nico.bauer@state.mn.us)), MDHR's Government Relations Director, with any questions.

Thank you for the immense amount of time and effort you and your staff have put into developing this budget and for allowing MDHR the opportunity to underscore the critical need for its full operating adjustment. We look forward to continuing these important conversations.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Lucero  
Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Human Rights