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March 4, 2025

Judiciary and Public Safety Committee  
Minnesota State Capitol - Room G-15  
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard., St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Re: Minnesota Sex Offender Program  
Dear Judiciary and Public Safety Committee

The Minnesota Sex Offender Program (MSOP), is a State-operated facility providing comprehensive sex offender treatment to individuals civilly committed as Sexually Dangerous Person (SDP) and/or a Sexual Psychopathic Personality (SPP). MSOP has two sites: St. Peter and Moose Lake. MSOP clients transitioning into and out of MSOP are housed at St. Peter, with the remainder of clients housed at Moose Lake.

MSOP Moose Lake is located on Moosehead Lake in Carlton County and houses approximately 480 clients from all 87 counties of Minnesota. As such, Carlton County absorbs the financial burden of investigating, incarcerating, and prosecuting violations of criminal code committed in the facility. In addition, all civil proceedings initiated by clients are venued in Carlton County (i.e., name change, expungements, etc.)

The Carlton County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) received an average of 305 calls a year for the past three years from MSOP (or related to MSOP). Each call for service impacts 9-1-1 dispatch, records/administrative support, and patrol/investigations division as well as requiring supervision and other county resources. The annual cost is approximately \$15,250.00 in staff wages to investigate and respond to MSOP. (\$50.04 average wage x 305 hours spent).

The Carlton County Jail is also impacted by MSOP clients incarcerated due to criminal charges arising at the facility with an average financial impact of \$23,100.00 a year (adding the number of "in custody" days for MSOP clients, averaging that number over 14 years multiplied by the cost of an inmate per day to identify the financial impact).

By definition, MSOP clients are mentally ill and have considerable time on their hands to engage in an array of litigation. Said litigation is filed in Carlton County and creates a substantial burden on Carlton County, even though the clients are residents of all 87 counties. Carlton County also receives numerous Minnesota Government Data Practice Act (MGDPA) requests from clients each year. Since taking office as the Carlton County Attorney, my office has prosecuted two attempted murders of MSOP staff members. In addition, my office reviews approximately twenty referrals a year for criminal prosecution of felony offenses committed at MSOP. Where criminal charges are filed, these criminal cases consume an inordinate amount of time due to the mental state of the defendant. It is common for MSOP defendants to represent themselves and to file dozens of motions in a criminal proceeding which requires extensive time and effort to respond. In addition, it is not uncommon for attorneys in the Carlton County Attorney's Office to be reported to the Board of Professional Responsibility and have personal lawsuits filed against them by a client. It is estimated that the cost to the Carlton County Attorney's Office is .5 FTE of a senior attorney, \$100,179/year 2025, \$105,342/year 2026, in addition to administrative and victim service support. For a total of \$220,000 over the next two years.

In addition, to the costs of investigation, incarceration and litigation, there is an added financial burden of MSOP's location on untaxed lakeshore property.

Carlton County is requesting financial support to fill this gap, and to working with the State on a long term funding solution that is equitable for the County and our residents.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lauri A. Ketola", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lauri A. Ketola  
Carlton County Attorney