

Tri-County Community Corrections



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March 26, 2025

Honorable Members of the Minnesota Legislature
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representatives and Senators,

We write today to express our strong support for SF 2546, and its companion bill HF 2422, which is scheduled for discussion within the Minnesota Legislature. This legislation develops a grant program for correctional facilities to better address mental and behavioral health needs of youth. As Administrators of the Red River Valley Juvenile Center located in Crookston, Minnesota, we believe this legislation is crucial to assist juvenile corrections facilities in responding to the mental health epidemic which is plaguing our youth. For far too long, children in the State of Minnesota have been placed in detention environments while awaiting an appropriate placement to address their mental health concerns. Currently there are several children in our facility waiting for placement to address their mental health, but for whom placement options are limited due to aggressive or non-compliant behaviors.

A lack of treatment options and out-of-home placement opportunities within Minnesota has resulted in correctional facilities being tasked with providing services to the most vulnerable and at-risk youth. Juvenile correctional facilities lack the resources to provide mental health services which can be used to bridge the gap between correctional placement and placement in a treatment or community setting. This bill would allow facilities to develop an infrastructure that will better meet the needs of the children in our care by implementing the use of trauma-informed responses, developing internal capacity to provide needed mental health services and expanding case management and wraparound services for those transitioning to treatment settings.

We respectfully urge members to support SF 2546 and HF 2422 and believe this bill is critical to assist correctional facilities across the state to better meet the behavioral health needs of children in our care.

Sincerely,

Andrew Larson
Executive Director

Paul Bissonette
Deputy Director

Kyle Allen
RRVJC Program Director