



March 26, 2025

To: Members of the House Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

Re: HF2060 (Nadeau)

Chair Noor, Chair Schomacker, and Committee Members:

My name is MacKenzie Sturm. I live in North Saint Cloud and work as a Reentry Navigator for Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. My background is in corrections, where I served as an Officer at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Saint Cloud for over six years. I am writing to voice my strong support for House File 2060, which would sustain and expand Minnesota's supported decision-making practice network. This legislation represents more than just an alternative to guardianship—it is a pathway to help people rebuild their lives after incarceration.

The success of supported decision-making in preserving individual autonomy for those who might otherwise need guardianship is well-documented. Now we have an opportunity to extend these proven methods to those reentering the community after incarceration. These individuals face critical decisions about housing, employment, healthcare, and relationships to name a few. Even the most capable person would struggle with these challenges simultaneously without support, especially after living in an environment where nearly all decisions were made for them.

What makes supported decision-making effective is its foundation in human dignity. The same principles that help people avoid unnecessary guardianship—respect for autonomy, structured support networks, and guided decision-making—are exactly what returning neighbors need to rebuild their lives. Our experience demonstrates this approach works for both populations.

Minnesota's current network of supported decision-making practitioners has shown promising results, but without renewed funding through HF2060, we risk losing this vital work. The bill would:

- Strengthen our statewide network of trained practitioners
- Ensure equal access to services across Minnesota
- Build stronger connections between corrections and community support
- Create specialized training for practitioners working in guardianship alternatives and reentry support
- Measure outcomes to improve our services



The evidence is clear: investing in supported decision-making saves money. Research shows that this approach reduces the need for restrictive guardianships, while also showing promise in lowering recidivism rates. When people have support making decisions, they make better choices. Better choices mean fewer court-ordered guardianships and fewer returns to prison. This is not simply good policy—it is smart economics.

HF2060 is not just another bill—it is about trusting people to write their own stories. When we give people the tools to rebuild their lives, whether they are facing guardianship decisions or returning to society after incarceration, they prove time and time again that they can succeed. I have seen it happen. That is why I am asking for your support of HF2060. Because everyone deserves the dignity of making their own choices, guided by compassion rather than control.

Thank you for your consideration of this vital legislation.

Respectfully,

MacKenzie L. Sturm

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

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