

Dear Minnesota House, members of the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Ely Zeimet and I am a Minnesota resident born and raised. For work I am a domestic violence youth advocate at Cornerstone Advocacy Services and also a member of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota's Young Women's Initiative Statewide Cabinet. I apologize that I cannot be present for the committee hearing, however, I still wanted to ensure that I showed my support for HF 1082.

Oftentimes, when we think of survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence our first thought is a single woman who cowers in fear to her male partner. However, an often overlooked population of domestic violence, sexual violence, and intimate partner violence also includes children and teens.

According to the Women's Foundation and University of Minnesota's 2024 Status of Women and Girls+ in Minnesota 16% 11th grade girls have reported being sexually harassed at some point in their life and 49% of unhoused women were abused as a child. Our young boys are affected as well, I have seen sons of mothers- even fathers themselves- enter the doors of my organization and look for support, safety, and care. Without intervention, sons of mothers who have been abused are more likely to become abusers themselves.

As I am sure many of you know, the federal Office of Violence Against Women has taken down all grant opportunities for intimate partner violence organizations; this funding includes both new and recurring grants and funding opportunities that are necessary to provide housing, physical and mental health care, and legal support to our participants who live in every single one of your districts. Without this funding or money our programs cannot run and our capability to assist our community will be put at risk. Please use not only your voices, but your dollars to show your communities that you support victim survivors and believe in putting a stop to violence in the home. I support HF 1082 and urge all of you to do the same.

Thank you,
Ely Zeimet