



March 17, 2025

Dear Co-Chair Moller, Co-Chair Novotny, & members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.F. 1082, which allocates grant funding to organizations providing direct services and advocacy for crime victims. Missions Inc. Programs is a social service agency located in Plymouth that provides housing and supportive services to individuals recovering from substance use disorder and/or experiencing domestic violence. In 2023 we provided emergency shelter to over 400 women and children fleeing domestic violence and served over 590 individuals in our domestic violence legal advocacy program. However, we know that the need for these services is much greater as we turn away about 78% of the requests for shelter we receive due to lack of capacity. While we make every effort to refer these survivors to other programs, we know that domestic violence programs across the state are struggling after many years of inadequate funding.

In the past, domestic violence, sexual violence, and child abuse were treated as private individual or family issues. We know now that this isn't true. Violence Free Minnesota recently published their annual Intimate Partner Homicide Report. In 2023, there were 40 confirmed victims of intimate partner homicide; of those 40 victims, at least 11 were bystanders – meaning first responders, family, friends, and strangers who sought to intervene or were simply in proximity. These “private” acts of violence spill out into the community, impacting everyone's safety. While homicides are often the most visible and extreme form of violence, everyday acts of violence threaten the safety and wellbeing of our community as well.

Crime victim advocates are an essential part of our public safety system. Not only do they provide immediate support and safety for victims after a violent incident, they also help prevent violence by assisting survivors in filing orders for protection, helping to navigate the family court system to protect children from abusive parents, and empowering survivors to build safer and more stable lives. While first responders address an immediate crisis, and the criminal legal system seeks to hold offenders accountable, crime victim advocates walk alongside survivors, sometimes for years, as they heal and rebuild their lives. Few other public safety functions are as long-term or as focused on what victims need and want. The fact that ongoing state funding for crime victim services hasn't increased in almost a decade has created an unsustainable situation where program budgets are stretched to the breaking point, unable to pay competitive wages for talented and qualified advocates and unable to pursue innovative expansions in services.

H.F. 1082 would help address the immediate funding crisis facing crime victim service providers. Without this funding, many survivors of domestic violence will be left without the support they need to thrive. Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill.

Warm regards,

Katy Daniels, CEO
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