

Chairman Longmuir and esteemed members of the Political Subdivisions Committee, my name is Jeff Frith, and I have the honor of serving as a Ramsey County Commissioner, as well as the chairman of the Lake Region Law Enforcement Center board of directors.

I am submitting my testimony today to express my strong support for House Bill 1197.

Permit me to share some insights about the Lake Region Law Enforcement Center (LRLEC). This facility, established in 1973, serves not only as a correctional institution but also as a crucial component of our community's safety and well-being. Located in Devils Lake, the LRLEC is a multi-jurisdictional adult correctional facility, with our current building reflecting our long-standing commitment to public safety since its construction in 1974. It represents a collaborative effort among Ramsey, Benson, Nelson, Eddy Counties, and the City of Devils Lake, highlighting the importance of unity in ensuring public safety.

As representatives of smaller communities, we are acutely aware of the challenges we face in securing funding for essential projects like the LRLEC. We would not be seeking your support if we had the resources to fully finance this endeavor on our own. We are committed to exploring all avenues, including cost reductions, potential downsizing, and even the possibility of raising taxes. However, we recognize that these measures may not suffice, which is why we are respectfully requesting the state's support to help us maintain the safety and security of our residents.

With that in mind, I kindly urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 1197.

Thank you for your consideration.