



Tuesday, February 12th, 2019

Dear Members of the House Public Safety Committee,

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity activists across Minnesota, I am writing today to urge you to vote “Yes” on HF689. This bill reforms and standardizes the length of probation across the state. More importantly, it allows courts to discharge defendants from probation early apart from murder and criminal sex offenses, which retain the maximum sentences.

Our criminal justice system should rehabilitate people who are incarcerated and provide second chances to those who have paid their debt to society. This bill takes an important step towards this by giving courts much-needed flexibility to release people from probation once they’ve shown themselves to be adequately reformed and pose little risk to society.

Technical violations of probation, like missing a meeting with the probation officer, failing a drug test, or leaving your county without authorization, are a leading cause of prison admissions. Removing people off probation who don’t need to be on it in the first place and better helping those who remain incarcerated succeed is both a cost-savings boon by avoiding needless, expensive incarceration and a public safety win by helping reduce recidivism.

Other states have shown how these policies can be successful in reducing incarceration and improving public safety. Pew Research found 37 states experienced simultaneous drops in their community corrections (i.e. probationers/parolees) and crime rates from 2007 to 2016 following probation reform policies. Getting smarter on crime will help make our communities safer, reduce recidivism, and save taxpayer dollars from needless incarceration.

It is for these reasons that I ask you to vote yes in support of HF689.

Sincerely,

Jason Flohrs
State Director
Americans for Prosperity - Minnesota

Through broad-based grassroots outreach, Americans for Prosperity (AFP) is driving long-term solutions to the country’s biggest problems. AFP activists engage friends and neighbors on key issues and encourage them to take an active role in building a culture of mutual benefit, where people succeed by helping one another. AFP recruits and unites activists in 35 states behind a common goal of advancing policies that will help people improve their lives. For more information, visit www.AmericansForProsperity.org