



MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE:

We continue to thank you for your public service. We write today to urge you to pass the Impartial Judiciary Bill, SF 70 (Rest) and HF 224 (Simon).

As people of faith we are committed to bring about justice. Access to a fair and impartial judiciary is a cornerstone of a just society. Peaceful resolution of disputes and fair access to courts without regard to social standing are necessary to safeguard freedom and human rights.

An interesting story: When Moses was no longer able to keep up with the number of disputes brought before him, his father-in-law, Jethro, called for a panel of judges to help adjudicate disputes. Jethro wisely counseled that four characteristics were key in selecting judges (Exodus 18:21):

- Accomplished people with good judgment, knowledge of the law, and the ability to recognize truth;
- Righteous and just people, who would not be swayed by flattery or threats;
- People of great integrity, who love truth;
- People untainted by money, who would not be subject to bribery.

We recognize that Minnesota's judicial canon of ethics that served our state so well no longer has legal standing. Thus we must act to safeguard our judiciary from partisanship, special-interest financing, and to preserve the very high confidence that Minnesotans currently have in our judges and courts.

We ask you to support a merit selection, retention election, and public evaluation system.

Sincerely,
JOINT RELIGIOUS LEGISLATIVE COALITION

Brian A. Rusche
Executive Director