



Assistant Minority Leader

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Representing the 6th District in Minnesota's Senate

Hello,

Friends and neighbors,

Later today, we expect Senate Democrats will pass their Public Safety budget. The priorities I hear about from constituents usually focus on supporting law enforcement and cracking down on criminals. Unfortunately, Senate Democrats took a different approach; their proposal is a get-out-of-jail-free card for criminals.

- * Their bill reduces prison time from 2/3 of an offender's sentence to half, which would release about 7400 inmates from incarceration. A shocking 92% of inmates will be eligible to be released from prison under the Democrat bill.

- * There is \$91 million in spending for nonprofits, much of it without any accountability.

- * The Sentencing Guidelines Commission will begin a "comprehensive review" of sentencing guidelines. Given the commission and Gov. Walz's recent emphasis on letting offenders out early, I am concerned about the motivation for this review and what the result will be.

The Democrats' public safety bill falls far short of what our communities need to stay safe. Although it includes some good things, like funding for school safety (though not more resource officers or infrastructure improvements), anti-terrorism grants, and mental health support, it fails to address the root cause of our safety issues: criminals being allowed to re-offend due to lack of accountability from prosecutors. We must demand change and hold

those responsible for their actions. The bill also does very little to strengthen and support law enforcement.

Republicans rolled out a comprehensive public safety plan earlier this year that would support police, confront criminal threats, and hold judges and prosecutors accountable for their decisions. This is what we should prioritize in public safety.

Ag bill is a mixed bag

The agriculture bill is not all bad. It's got some good stuff in it, like money to bring high-speed internet access to areas that need it, grants for meat processing, dairy premiums, biofuels, and grants for local governments to control noxious weeds. Republicans funded many of these programs when we were in control of the Senate.

What's also worth mentioning is what's not in the bill. Controversial items, like bans on treated seeds or certain types of fertilizers, like slow-release fertilizers, were left out. And their bill does not overhaul the Board of Animal Health like they had talked about, which is good news.

There is one really controversial provision in the bill: the 'grain indemnity program.' Basically, this is a tax on farmers who store their crops in a grain elevator. They will be required to pay into a fund that will reimburse other farmers if the elevator goes bankrupt, although they will have the option to opt-out at a later date.

It may sound nice, but I have heard concerns about it from farmers. They'll have to pay into this program whether they can afford it or not. And grain elevators already offer insurance to farmers who want it, so a new government mandate is not necessary.

The bill passed the Senate on a bipartisan vote because there are some good things in it, but the grain indemnity program raises serious concerns.

Contact me

If you have any questions or comments about the issues we are working on, please contact me anytime. My email is sen.justin.eichorn@senate.mn, or you can call me at 651-296-7079.

Don't forget to follow me on Facebook: <https://www.fb.com/SenatorJustinEichorn>.

It is a privilege to serve you!

Sincerely,

Justin D. Eichorn

Minnesota Senate, District 6
