

PRETRIAL DATA TRANSPARENCY ACT

Improving Pretrial Data Collection to Prioritize Safety & Fairness

OVERVIEW:

The Pretrial Data Transparency Act enhances the transparency of Minnesota's pretrial system by requiring the collection of pretrial data. The bill requires that pretrial data be sent to the Sentencing Guidelines Commission, and be made available for analysis to research institutions. The lack of centralization of pretrial data is an obstacle for those working to understand and improve pretrial practices statewide.

KEY PROVISIONS:

Data Collection: Requires the systematic collection of pretrial data, including:

- Number of individuals held in jail pretrial.
- Bail amounts set and whether individuals paid their bail.
- Relationship between bail amounts and length of pretrial detention.
- The likelihood of pleading guilty among those jailed pretrial versus those released.

Public Transparency: Ensures that collected data is made available to research institutions, allowing researchers to analyze the data, identify trends, and publish their findings for use by community members and policymakers.

RATIONALE:

Minnesota's current pretrial data system lacks transparency, making it challenging to assess key aspects of pretrial detention, including the impact of bail on detention lengths and case outcomes. The absence of comprehensive data hinders efforts to identify disparities and makes it nearly impossible to measure the effects of changes to the pretrial system. By mandating the collection of pretrial data, this legislation seeks to:

- Highlight areas where the current system is failing and needs reform.
- Identify successful practices that can serve as models for improvement.
- Provide critical insights into the financial and social impact of pretrial detention.

*In a recent poll,
80% of Minnesotans
support requiring
the state to collect
pretrial data.*

IMPACT:

This bill would create a more transparent, accountable, and data-driven pretrial system. By shedding light on pretrial detention trends and disparities, the legislation supports informed decision-making that can lead to fairer pretrial practices, reduced unnecessary incarceration, and improved justice outcomes for individuals, families, and communities.