

Florine K. Ching



May 5, 2021

Public Safety and Judiciary Conference Committee
Minnesota Legislature

Dear Conference Committee Members:

I am Flo Ching, the mother of Travis Jordan. On November 9, 2018 my son was killed by two police officers while he was in the throes of a mental health crisis. I grieve the loss of my son every day, especially knowing this tragedy never needed to happen. People experiencing mental health crises are 16 times more likely to die during a police encounter than any other group of people.

There is an important provision in the Public Safety and Judiciary omnibus bill, article 19, section 10, that would require 911 operators to refer mental health crisis calls whenever possible to the mobile mental health crisis teams that exist in all 87 counties in the state. Under this bill, we would finally utilize the mental health emergency responders we are already paying for. Ramsey County is doing this and it works very well. It's working because it takes the burden away from police while ensuring people in crisis receive the immediate care they need.

The bill does not require mental health crisis teams to be used if they are unavailable or circumstances require a police response. Safety remains primary.

Please support this provision in the omnibus bill, which gets the right professionals to the right place at the right time, improving care and saving money in the long run. Please support Travis's Law.

If anything can come from the death of my son, this bill will help to make sure that no other family has to go through the pain our family has experienced and that people in mental health crisis will get the care they need.

Sincerely,

Flo Ching
Mother of Travis Jordan