



**Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers  
Minnesota Chapter**

## **Position Statement**

### **The US District Court Ruling (6/17/15) on Karsjens v. Jesson: The Constitutionality of the Minnesota Sex Offender Program and Sexual Offender Civil Commitment in Minnesota**

The Minnesota Chapter of The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (MnATSA) is a diverse group of professionals who work together for the assessment, treatment, and supervision of sexual offenders, and the prevention of sexual abuse in Minnesota. We promote and rely on the latest science and research to inform our work, guide best practices, and educate others.

We find the Federal Court's ruling by Judge Donovan Frank to be fair and necessary to correct what has become a broken system of sexual offender civil commitment in Minnesota.

MnATSA applauds and supports Judge Frank's order to bring many stakeholders together, from across Minnesota, to explore the reforms that are necessary to achieve a constitutionally sound framework and system for sexual offender civil commitment in Minnesota. Judge Frank's order addresses the need to reform the entire civil commitment process in Minnesota - as defined in statutes, and as applied. Legislative changes are necessary to ensure that the civil commitment process is constitutionally sound, from petition, to commitment, least restrictive placement, treatment, reviews of commitment, viability of release, and successful discharge. Successfully returning MSOP clients to the community, conditionally or unconditionally, will require public and professional education about the facts of sexual offending, efficacy of treatment, risk management of sexual reoffending, and ultimately, will need support from the community.

The Federal Court ruling of June 17, 2015 is the beginning of a new era of sexual offender civil commitment in Minnesota. MnATSA is invested in working with others to craft new laws and more effective practices which can achieve a constitutional balance between public safety, effective treatment, prudent management, and the protection of civil rights for all who are subject to civil commitment.

Minnesota has a robust network of highly trained and competent professionals able to meet the treatment needs of those under civil commitment who might be housed in less restrictive settings outside of the secure facilities of MSOP-Moose Lake and St. Peter.

We hope Judge Frank's ruling will result in stakeholders working together to enact reforms that are grounded in sound public policy, informed by science and research, and protect the varied interests and concerns for all Minnesotans.

**Adopted by the MnATSA Board of Directors, June 18, 2015**