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Member, Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission
November 5, 2025

President and Members of the City Council, thank you for the opportunity to comment on Resolution 25-1728 scheduled for consideration at your upcoming meeting.

I respectfully ask that you **delay or postpone action on Resolution 25-1728**, which would create a separate *Reparations Harm Study RFP Review Committee.*

My concern is not with the harm study itself, but with how this resolution is structured. It **interferes with the statutory responsibilities** of the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission under Chapter 112 of the City's Administrative Code.

Under that ordinance, the Commission—not a separate committee—is charged with:

- developing the annual work plan;
- recommending policy and budget priorities; and
- evaluating the effectiveness of reparative initiatives.

The Commission's **2024–2025 Work Plan already includes the Harm Report as a core deliverable.**
If the contractor review and selection process are removed from the Commission's control, the Commission cannot ensure that the study aligns with its goals or methodology.

Furthermore, because the Commission was created by ordinance, any change to its duties must also be made **by ordinance**, not by resolution. Resolution 25-1728 effectively amends Chapter 112 without going through that formal legislative process.

There are also transparency concerns. The Commission operates under open-meeting requirements; a smaller staff-directed review committee may not. Moving deliberations outside public view would undermine community trust in this process.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to postpone action on Resolution 25-1728 until the Reparations Commission has:

1. reviewed the proposal in full, and
2. provided a formal recommendation to the Council, as required by § 112.06(b).

Taking this step will preserve the Commission's independence, ensure compliance with the governing ordinance, and keep this important work community-driven and transparent.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to a fair and lawful reparations process.

I. Background

Ordinance 22-52 (codified as *Chapter 112 – Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission*) established the Commission as the City's official advisory body for developing, evaluating, and recommending reparative policies and programs.

Resolution 25-1728 (November 5 2025) proposes the creation of a separate *Reparations Harm Study RFP Review Committee* to review contractor proposals and make recommendations to the Commission and Council.

II. Points of Conflict

Area	Chapter 112 Provision	Conflict in Resolution 25-1728
Commission Authority	§ 112.06(a)–(b) – Commission must "develop and recommend policies, programs, and budget actions to advance reparations."	Transfers key research & evaluation authority (selection of Harm Study contractor) to a separate City-created committee.
Work Plan Execution	§ 112.06(a) – Commission prepares and implements an annual work plan.	Interferes with implementation of the Commission's 2024–25 Work Plan priority to direct the Harm Report.
Staff Support Role	§ 112.05 – City staff must support the Commission's work.	Reassigns staff to assist a new Review Committee rather than the Commission itself.
Advisory Hierarchy	Chapter 112 positions the Commission as advisor to the Council and Mayor.	Council resolution directs how Commission work is performed, reversing the intended advisory relationship.
Legislative Process	Powers of the Commission established by ordinance.	Modifies those powers by resolution without amending Chapter 112 — a procedural error under the City Charter.
Transparency	§ 112.04 – Commission deliberations must be public.	Creates a smaller committee not clearly subject to Open Meeting Law requirements.

III. Legal and Procedural Implications

1. **Ultra Vires Action:** Because the Commission's authority derives from ordinance, a resolution cannot legally reduce or reassign its functions.
2. **Administrative Inconsistency:** Reassigning staff away from the Commission contradicts § 112.05 and compromises the Commission's independence.
3. **Policy Disruption:** By separating the harm-study procurement from Commission oversight, the resolution undermines implementation of the Commission's approved work plan.

IV. Conclusion

Resolution 25-1728 conflicts with multiple provisions of Chapter 112 and should be **postponed or amended** to restore the Commission's rightful role in overseeing and recommending research activities central to its mandate.