

February 1st, 2023

Chair Wiklund

Members of the Health & Human Services Committee

Dear Chair Wiklund and members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

I am writing as a medical doctor to express support for SF388. Health professionals in Minnesota know that inadequate shelter is a public health issue that results in worse health outcomes and suffering for our citizens. Homelessness disproportionately impacts poor and minority groups such as persons of color, and those identifying as GLBTQ. We know that shelter saves lives and housing ends homelessness, especially for members of these communities.

I support everything included, but want to lift up three of the items listed in the legislation:

\$150 million for Emergency Shelter Facilities

Every region in the state needs access to additional shelter spaces, and this statewide funding source would provide opportunities for shelters to generate new models to meet the need such as those that are culturally responsive, gender affirming, accessible, and are low barrier; shelter is the first step to finding permanent housing for families, individuals, and seniors experiencing homelessness.

\$40 million in 2024/25 and \$70 million in 2026/27 for the Emergency Services Program (ESP)

We are thrilled that SF388 includes this provision. This funding will allow organizations and local communities to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness through supporting shelters, outreach, motel vouchers, and other key resources and services. This increase will be key to supporting both new and existing shelters in providing services to people experiencing homelessness.

\$9 million for the Transitional Housing Program (THP)

THP helps individuals and families obtain stable housing where they can develop good rental history while finding a permanent housing destination.

I applaud the leadership for bringing this bill forward. Shelter saves lives and housing ends homelessness.

Sincerely,

Craig S Roth, MD, FACP

Member, Medical Doctors for Health Equity and the American College of Physicians, MN Chapter.

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