

February 1st, 2023  
Chair Wiklund  
Members of the Health & Human Services Committee

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

I, as a third-year medical student and advocate for the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (MCH), am writing to express support for SF388. During my rotations thus far, I have personally seen the damaging effects on health that comes from unstable housing. It is heartbreaking when we must discharge someone who is unhoused to the street because there are not enough shelter beds available. MCH has been advocating towards ending unsheltered homelessness for a number of years, something I am proud to be a part of. I know this package will improve health outcomes for my future patients, and I am so grateful to hopefully see this become a reality. Along with the MCH, I want to lift up three of the items listed in the legislation and fully support everything included in the bill.

**\$150 million for Emergency Shelter Facilities**

While MCH is advocating for \$200 million in funding, we are very pleased with \$150 million being included in SF388. Unfortunately, according to the Homelessness Management Information System, 80 of our 87 counties have either no shelter beds or lack enough shelter beds to meet the need. MCH completed a statewide survey to gauge the needed state resources to build, acquire, or renovate shelters to meet the need. We've identified nearly \$200 million in capital needs statewide that would create or preserve over 3,400 shelter spaces. 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 our full request for ESP. 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)**

Along with responding to our unsheltered homelessness crisis, SF388 includes funding for THP which is vital for many individuals and families leaving shelter. THP helps individuals and families obtain stable housing where they can develop good rental history while finding a permanent housing destination.

In addition to the above priorities, MCH supports the remaining items included in SF388:

- **Homeless Management Information System**
- **Homeless Youth Act**
- **Homeless youth; chosen family grants**

I am so grateful to the leadership for bringing this bill forward. Shelter saves lives and housing ends homelessness.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Madzey  
MD Candidate - University of Minnesota