



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Twin Cities

Catholic Charities at Elliot Park
1007 East 14th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-204-8500 | cctwincities.org

March 15, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Health & Human Services Committee

Re: Support for SF1951 (MA Recuperative Care Services)

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Catholic Charities Twin Cities, I write in support of SF1951, a bill establishing a statewide MA reimbursement for recuperative care services for individuals experiencing homelessness, and to thank Senator Morrison and her co-authors for their leadership on this life-saving issue.

Individuals experiencing homelessness face an increased risk and earlier onset of many health problems. They also face greater barriers to accessing care.

The recuperative care programs operating at Catholic Charities' Higher Ground Saint Paul and Endeavors Residence in Elliot Park are innovative examples of how we can reduce these barriers to care and improve patient outcomes through strong collaborations with hospitals and healthcare systems.

Higher Ground Saint Paul and Endeavors Residence include dedicate space for a total of 40 individuals experiencing homelessness who have been discharged from the hospital but aren't well enough to recover on the street or without support. In the two years prior to COVID-19, we served nearly 700 individuals at Higher Ground Saint Paul alone, leading to more than \$1 million in estimated annual cost savings and nearly 2,000 avoidable hospital days each year.

Recuperative care decreases emergency room visits and hospital readmissions, helps prevent the need for higher-cost components of medical care, and provides a safe place for people experiencing homelessness to heal. It is a concrete example of what can happen when our public, private and nonprofit sectors work together toward a common goal.

SF1951 would build upon this model to serve more Minnesotans most in need, alleviate strains on our health systems, and advance efforts to reduce Minnesota's health inequities. We ask for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorna Schmidt".

Lorna Schmidt
Director of Public Policy & Advocacy