

ST PAUL

AREA CHAMBER

401 N Robert Street, Suite 150
St. Paul, MN 55101

MAKING CONNECTIONS THAT COUNT

March 22, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
2107 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and committee members:

On behalf of the 1700+ members and affiliates of the St. Paul Area Chamber, who together represent more than 3 million employees and their families, I'd like to request your support for S.F. 2033.

The homeless population in Ramsey County has nearly doubled since 2016. To address this emergency, the County utilized pandemic-related funding to increase shelter capacity and create supports to quickly move people from homelessness to housing. However, much of this one-time funding is set to expire and additional resources will be needed to continue to stand up these crucial services. Heading Home Ramsey's \$75 million request will support the following:

- Continued shelter operation for single adults, including expanded women's shelter options.
- Continued operation of day service shelters.
- A low-barrier shelter pilot program with 24/7 staffing for frequent users of emergency shelters.
- A 100-bed family shelter and additional supports for families.
- Improved outreach and extreme weather support.

This investment will bridge the gap while Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul construct deeply affordable housing, to which they have committed \$74 million. These resources will also help make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring and address the racial disparities in our homeless population.

It is our moral imperative to care for the unsheltered, and provide safe housing so people are not forced to sleep on the street or within the skyways. As home to our State Capitol, Ramsey County is providing housing and supports to residents from every corner of the Minnesota. It is appropriate that the State help ensure that these critical services continue uninterrupted.

Respectfully,



B Kyle
President & CEO
St. Paul Area Chamber



St. Paul Area Chamber



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