



AICHO

American Indian Community Housing Organization

March 31, 2023

Dear Minnesota Senate Health and Human Services Committee:

I am writing in support of Emergency Shelter Capital and support service funding. I am the Executive Director of the American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO), an Indigenous-led nonprofit organization and service provider in Duluth. AICHO provides the only culturally specific domestic violence emergency shelter in our region, in operation since the mid-1990s. Dabinoo'igan Shelter serves an average of 130-160 individuals per year, with 10 beds available, and turns away over 500 individuals requesting shelter because the 10 beds are full. AICHO is in process to renovate space to increase shelter space to 24 beds. The need is overwhelming. At the Duluth Warming Shelter, a community space designed to offer unsheltered individuals a place to be overnight so they do not freeze to death, the data showed 47% were BIPOC community members who accessed this essential life-saving resource. We do not have anywhere near the amount of family shelter space our community needs and unsheltered families with children suffer.

Please support funding to address shelter capital projects and essential support services. Miigwech for the work you are doing this legislative session to invest in Minnesota.

Miigwech,

LeAnn Littlewolf

Executive Director

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