

# Student Association

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH

**Driven to Discover™**

March 1, 2023

Dear members of the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee

My name is Olivia Osei-Tutu, and I currently serve as the Chief External Affairs Officer in the UMD Student Association (UMDSA). I am writing to the Housing Finance and Policy Committee on behalf of UMDSA. As a student government, we represent over 9,000 students at the University of Minnesota - Duluth. For students, finding housing can be a struggle in Duluth and landlords use that to pressure them into signing leases early. We urge you to support this housing bill, as it will protect students from being pressured into signing leases early, ensure students are aware of any potential concerns in their rental before signing a lease, and provide support for finding subletters. With a capacity of housing almost 3,000 students on campus, majority of students are forced to live off campus. Due to inexperience with off-campus housing and renting, students are more susceptible to landlords taking advantage of their inexperience. Passing the bill would provide protection, lower the risk, and lower the stress that students experience when trying to obtain off campus housing.

The city of Duluth is currently undergoing a housing crisis that is exacerbated with UMD not having enough on-campus housing for all students. These detrimental factors create stress and a sense of urgency for students to sign a lease as fast as possible, regardless of the condition of the property. Oftentimes, students will do brief walkthroughs of model units that inadequately represent the housing they are placed in. A walkthrough of a model unit creates false expectations. Without a walkthrough of the actual unit, landlords could potentially place students at risk and cause potential safety concerns. Students will sign a lease without any knowledge of potential hazards and once they move in, landlords are slow/poor with responding to their concerns. Having the additional protections in place from this bill would ensure students and other renters in Minnesota are provided the necessary knowledge about the unit, and alleviate the pressure and stresses of signing a lease.

By supporting this bill, legislators are supporting the increasing need for off-campus student housing across Minnesota. This kind of support will help alleviate and prevent some of the stress created by renting and will not go unnoticed by students across Minnesota. UMD Student Association thanks you for your support on this bill and service on the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee.

Sincerely,

Olivia Osei-Tutu  
Chief External Affairs Officer  
UMD Student Association  
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**UMDSA Congress Date:** February 27, 2023

**Agenda Item:** Resolution to support the housing bill SF 1298

Review       Review/Action       Action       Discussion

**Presenter:** Chief External Affairs Officer - Olivia Osei-Tutu

**Purpose:** To support the housing bill (SF 1298) and submit a letter of support to the hearing.

**Background Information:** The Government & Legislative Affairs State Coordinator for USG, Siya Sakhardande, reached out asking for UMDSA's support for SF 1298. This bill will protect tenants from being pressured by landlords to early renew leases, ensure landlords do walkthroughs with tenants at the start and end of the lease, provide a penalty for not offering to do a move in or move out inspection, and help tenants find subletters.

**Presidential Input:** President Nguyen *supports* this resolution.

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## WHEREAS,

ACCORDING TO THE UMDSA BYLAWS ARTICLE VI, SECTION 4 EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HAS A DUTY TO ADVOCATE STUDENT INTERESTS TO THE LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

## WHEREAS,

COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO BEING TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BY LANDLORDS, DUE TO NOT HAVING A LOT OF EXPERIENCE WITH RENTING OR KNOWING TENANT RIGHTS.

## WHEREAS,

ONE OF PRESIDENT NAM NGUYEN'S INITIATIVES IS TO INCREASE COLLABORATIONS ACROSS THE SYSTEM CAMPUSES.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** UMDSA SUPPORTS THE SF 1091 HOUSING BILL.



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**Speaker of Congress**  
Parker Schultz



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**President**  
Nam Nguyen

Vote Count: 18 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions