



**May 1, 2024**

Senator Omar Fateh

95 University Avenue W.

Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3219

St. Paul, MN 55155

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Senator Fateh:

On behalf of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota & Iowa, I write to express our strong support for SF3572, the Minnesota People Over Parking Act. Our union represents over 50,000 Minnesota healthcare workers who work in hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and self-directed home care. It is pro-worker to eliminate government mandated parking minimums. For most working families, housing is their biggest family expense. But, in too many places, housing costs are exploding. Union contracts with great pay increases can be undercut when your rent goes up faster. Housing costs more when local governments forces people to pay for empty parking spaces they do not want or need. That is why the Minnesota AFL-CIO passed a housing resolution this year that, along with endorsing other policies, called for eliminating mandatory parking minimums.

Eliminating parking minimums will help reduce the cost of housing because people won't have to pay for pricey land and expensive construction required by such mandates. Many of our members choose to work at hospitals, clinics, and other major healthcare settings precisely because they

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are on reliable transit routes. This allows them to save on the cost of a car. They could save even more on rent, but only if they were allowed to find housing that did not include the extra cost created by government parking minimums. Local governments should not be able to force them to pay for expensive and unwanted parking.

That is why my union has been active on this issue for many years. Almost a decade ago, we testified in support of the Minneapolis City Council proposal to eliminate parking minimums along transit corridors in Minneapolis. Later, we testified in support of more comprehensive reforms that eliminated all parking minimums in Minneapolis. Just a few months ago, we testified in support when St. Paul did the same thing. Economic experts acknowledge that these parking reforms were a major reason why Minneapolis has been able to grow their housing supply so dramatically. This has helped keep rent increase lower than other areas. Additional housing in Minneapolis helps lower rents throughout the Metro area. This amounts to a huge pay increase for our members.

This bill makes housing more affordable for our caregivers. It fights climate change by reducing our dependence on cars and gas. It allows low-income and people of color more access to the employers with the best job opportunities and communities with the best public services. This is a bill where members of both parties can come together to support working families.

Sincerely yours,

Rick Varco

Political Director