



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Twin Cities

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

April 3, 2024

Senator Melissa Wklund, Chair
Senate Health & Human Services Committee

RE: Support for SF 4018 (Mohamed) & SF 4779 (Marty)

Chair Wklund and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Catholic Charities Twin Cities, I write in support of SF 4018 (Mohamed) and SF 4779 (Marty), which would increase regional investments in the emergency shelter system.

Catholic Charities is a leading provider of emergency shelter, housing, and direct services, serving more than 25,000 youth and adults annually. More than half of these individuals seek services through our overnight shelters and day service centers, where skilled staff provide hot meals, daily essentials, and connections to permanent housing, finance and employment resources, healthcare, and more.

Investments made by the legislature last session have benefited individuals experiencing homelessness and providers that serve them, but we know there is still much to do.

From 2022–2023, Catholic Charities saw a 37% increase in the number of people served at our Saint Paul Opportunity Center alone—exceeding pre-pandemic levels. As one-time state appropriations expire, the need to explore additional and more predictable funding models for overnight and daytime shelter operations still exists. Without it, we risk losing capacity within the existing shelter system that serves as the safety net for the most vulnerable in our community.

The investments proposed in SF 4018 and SF 4779 would build on the work of the legislature and partners to establish a more robust emergency shelter system and help set the stage for more integrated partnerships by recognizing the role of counties and continuums of care in coordinating the homelessness response. The piloting of a funding formula to award dollars based on need also has potential to bring more predictable funding streams to providers who are working to plan and implement effective, trauma-informed strategies that create stronger pathways to safe, stable homes.

Catholic Charities remains committed to our mission of serving those most in need, but we cannot do this work alone. We ask for your continued support this session as we work together to advance our shared goal of making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

Sincerely,

Lorna Schmidt
Director, Public Policy & Advocacy
lorna.schmidt@cctwincities.org