

Liz Hersh, Principal of Policy and Advocacy
Community Solutions
Re. Testimony in Support of Bridge to Shelter Act

My name is Liz Hersh, and I serve as the Principal of Policy and Advocacy for [Community Solutions](http://www.community.solutions), a national organization committed to ending homelessness. I am writing on behalf of Community Solutions to endorse the proposed “Bridge to Shelter Act.” Through Community Solutions’ work with over 100 communities across the nation, including those within Minnesota, specifically in [Hennepin County](#), we have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of well-coordinated systems that leverage real-time, [by-name data](#) to make strategic housing investments. This approach, which emphasizes coordination across disciplines, has consistently proven effective in reducing the number of individuals experiencing homelessness.

Under the proposed Bridge to Shelter Act” the allocation of \$60 million per year over a five-year period reflects a significant commitment to addressing homelessness comprehensively and sustainably. By distributing funds to five Continuum of Care (CoC) regions, including the Metro and non-Metro CoCs, the legislation ensures a broad and equitable distribution of resources, guided by HUD CoC Point-In-Time Count reporting. Furthermore, the eligibility criteria for fund usage, including shelters and outreach, unsheltered navigation services, housing-focused case management, shelter diversion, and crisis response services, align with best practices and evidence-based approaches in addressing homelessness. This holistic approach recognizes the diverse needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and emphasizes the importance of providing tailored support and interventions.

Crucially, the legislation empowers local communities to prioritize and allocate resources based on their specific needs and circumstances, fostering collaboration and accountability at the grassroots level. By entrusting each CoC with the responsibility of monitoring impact and ensuring alignment with local priorities, the legislation promotes a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in our efforts to end homelessness.

In conclusion, I urge you to support the 'Bridge to Shelter' legislation. By investing in data-driven strategies, comprehensive support services, and collaborative partnerships, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make meaningful progress in addressing homelessness and building a more inclusive and resilient community for all.

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