



Re: SF3303 (Lucero) as amended and SF3080 (Draheim) as amended

March 4, 2024

Chair Port and members of the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee,

On behalf of the housing industry in Minnesota, Housing First Minnesota offers this letter in support of SF 3303 (Lucero) as amended and SF 3080 (Draheim) as amended.

By way of background, Housing First Minnesota is a trade association of nearly one thousand members of the housing industry with the mission of homeownership opportunities for all.

Our concerns about the future of homeownership in Minnesota continue to grow. Our housing market is chronically under-supplied and the affordability of housing is increasingly out of reach for too many.

The homebuilding industry is working to meet the needs of Minnesotans, but we need your help. Both bills, as part of the larger “Minnesotans for More Homes” package, will make significant strides for the next generation of homebuyers.

A well-known exclusionary zoning tactic, aesthetic mandates take many forms, including luxury stone or brick façade requirements, high-end architectural design elements, oversized design elements, extra-large garages, mandates on rooms above garages, front porches, bans on vinyl siding, and more. On a typical new home, these mandates can exceed \$20,000 per home.

Emily Hamilton of the Mercatus Center at George Mason University says, *“Vinyl siding bans are one of the clearest ways that land use regulations have no purpose other than excluding households that are priced out when more expensive materials are required.”*

SF3303 (Lucero) as amended seeks to end these exclusionary policies and restore reasonable homeowner choice on home design.

SF3080 (Draheim) as amended, is a comprehensive approach to addressing several key areas where Minnesota’s housing policies are increasing costs and preventing the creation of needed starter homes.

SF3080 lifts unnecessary roadblocks, strengthens our housing market, increases housing affordability and makes Minnesota more competitive in the region. And importantly, it ends “zoning by loophole” with needed changes to the ways Planned Unit Developments are used today.



Both of these bills will help put homebuyers back in charge of their housing choices and have the potential to positively transform Minnesota's housing market for the next generation.

Thank you for your consideration and we strongly urge your support of SF3303 as amended and SF3080 as amended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Foster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Foster,
Vice President, Legislative & Political Affairs
Housing First Minnesota

