



April 8, 2024ss

The Honorable Lindsey Port  
Chair, Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee  
3213 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Mike Howard  
Chair, Housing Finance and Policy Committee  
473 State Office Building  
St Paul, MN 55155

Via email

**Re: Support for S.F.2040/H.F.2271**

Dear Chair Port, Chair Howard and members of the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee of the Senate and the Housing Finance and Policy Committee of the House:

We write in support of S.F.2040/H.F.2271, and the continued need to support housing stability for Minnesotans through FHPAP (Family Homeless Prevention Assistance Program).

Families across Minnesota continue to need significant help to prevent evictions and maintain access to stable homes. Eviction filings have increased 44% relative to the pre-COVID filing rate in Minnesota. From just 2022 to 2023, eviction filings jumped 8% to 24,211 evictions filed in 2023. Housing instability and eviction filings continue to be a statewide problem, with Anoka, Clay, Dakota and Ramsey Counties showing the highest eviction filing rates through 2023, with Benton, Hennepin and Washington Counties close behind. As most evictions are due to non-payment of rent, the availability of emergency rental assistance often means the difference between homelessness and housing.

FHPAP is a critical lifeline for those who have experienced a crisis that makes them at risk of homelessness. FHPAP provides direct assistance that is flexible to the needs of the applicant with the goal of ensuring stable housing - examples of its uses include payment of back rent, utilities, mortgage, deposits and fees, providing case management, and rapid rehousing assistance.

As FHPAP provides direct assistance to address housing emergencies, any increase will mean more households will have the means to ensure their housing stability, which is critical to the health, well-being, and future potential of children and families. For instance, both Hennepin County and Three Rivers Community Action, serving multiple counties in Southeast Minnesota, report their greatest requests are for back rent, with an average household payment of \$3,000. With \$10 million in additional funding, over 3,300 families across the state would receive assistance – these are families that would otherwise be at risk of homelessness.

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While FHPAP has in past years been funded at approximately \$10 million annually, this represents a small portion of the need, with FHPAP funding allocations typically expended within either one or two weeks of receipt by providers. At least \$200 million annually is needed to fund housing support and emergency rental assistance for qualifying households. Recent funding requests for FHPAP to Minnesota Housing indicate that even with the greatly expanded resources provided during the 2023 Legislative Session, the need for FHPAP program resources is not fully met. For Minnesota Housing's Round 1 FHPAP request for proposals for 2024-25, providers requested \$83,786,796 in funding, with only \$51,355,000 awarded. The Round 2 FHPAP RFP similarly saw \$63,862,938 in requested funding, with only \$27,000,000 available.

The Minnesota ERASE Campaign (End Rental Arrears and Stop Evictions) is an effort to eliminate rental indebtedness, prevent evictions, and create support for long-term policy changes to end housing instability and homelessness. Co-convenors of the campaign include ACER (African Career Education Resource); Housing Justice Center, and MHP (Minnesota Housing Partnership).

Thank you for your attention. We ask you to do everything possible to ensure no family is displaced or unhoused and urge your support for **S.F.2040/H.F.2271**.

Sincerely,

All Elders United for Justice  
African Career Education & Resource  
Catholic Charities Twin Cities  
Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)  
Dakota County Community Services  
East Metro Civic Alliance  
Family Housing Fund  
Hearth Connection  
HOME Line  
Homes for All  
Housing Justice Center  
JJJ/Vegan by Nature  
Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota  
NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Minnesota  
National Manufactured Home Owners Association  
No More Streets  
Merrick Community Services  
Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers  
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH) Speakers Bureau, "We are Your Neighbors"  
Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless  
Minnesota Housing Partnership  
Minnesota Tribal Collaborative  
Stable Housing is the Priority (SHIP) Collaborative  
The Arc Minnesota  
Three Rivers Community Action  
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation  
YMCA of the North

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