



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Twin Cities

Catholic Charities at Elliot Park
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March 13, 2025

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Re: Bridge to Shelter Act Support (SF2124)

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express Catholic Charities Twin Cities' (CCTC) support for SF 2124; specifically, increasing the state's homeless response capacity with the allocation of new Emergency Services Program (ESP) dollars to counties to support providers who offer critical services to those experiencing homelessness.

The ESP funding appropriated by the 2023 legislature provided significant relief to many emergency service providers, allowing CCTC to assist thousands of people in some of their most challenging moments. As a leading provider of emergency shelter, housing, and direct services, CCTC served 33,000 children, families and adults last year – nearly half through our overnight shelters and daytime service centers, where skilled staff provide hot meals, daily essentials and connections to permanent housing, employment resources, healthcare, and more.

We also know that need continues to grow. CCTC is experiencing budget gaps at our overnight and daytime shelters, where ESP is the primary public funding source. Allocating new homeless response dollars via SF 2124 would increase providers' capacity to provide essential services that improve the health, housing stability, and well-being of our neighbors most in need.

Investments that allow counties to augment the existing emergency services infrastructure will maximize the 2023 legislature's ESP investment and increase our great state's ability to ensure the needs of our most vulnerable community members are met.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jamie Verbrugge
President and CEO