

March 11, 2025

Re: Support of SF2124

Chair Wiklund and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, a coalition of over 70 emergency shelter providers, I want to express our strong support for SF2124/HF1914. This legislation provides additional necessary investment in Minnesota's homelessness response system by funding emergency services grants, innovative homelessness response investments to our County partners, and needed County capacity-building resources.

As this Committee knows well, Minnesota's emergency shelter system is under immense strain. We are continually grateful for the historic state investments made in 2023, they have been a lifeline to shelter providers across the state. Providers do continue to face funding shortfalls that threaten their ability to keep doors open, maintain services, and operate at full capacity. With the threats to reductions of homelessness funding at the Federal level and growing individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Minnesota, without additional state support, more shelter providers will be forced to close, leaving even fewer options for Minnesotans.

SF2124/HF1914 addresses these gaps by providing targeted funding to sustain and expand emergency shelter operations for both providers but Counties as well, who are critical partners to shelter providers in support of stabilizing individuals and families. Additionally, the proposed new investment in provider capacity-building will allow counties to work with each other to share best practices and program management, because there is not a single county in Minnesota that does not deal with unsheltered homelessness. MCH appreciates Counties need funding to provide homelessness services, and we support any new resources to our County partners that would augment the existing homelessness response system.

Without additional state investment, Minnesota's homelessness response system will continue to be strained. We need this bill to pass to prevent further service disruptions and ensure that Minnesotans in crisis have a place to turn.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership,

Matt Traynor

Interim Executive Director & Director of Advocacy, MN Coalition for the Homeless