



March 31, 2025

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee

Re: Support for the Homeless Elders Program Funding (SF 1162)

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee:

First, thank you for your past support of Catholic Charities Homeless Elders program; With your support, the 2023 legislature appropriated \$1.5 million to the program, which has effectively moved hundreds of older adults out of homelessness. SF 1162 would reauthorize this funding and allow Catholic Charities to continue supporting seniors in need. I am writing on behalf of [organization] to express our support for SF1162.

Older adults experiencing homelessness face unique challenges that require specialized care. Many have complex health conditions, including physical disability, mental health concerns, or memory loss. Nearly 90% of older adults experiencing homelessness are unable to work or struggle to complete essential daily activities. Many are experiencing homelessness for the first time in their lives, making them especially vulnerable.

Catholic Charities' Homeless Elders Program provides lifesaving services that allow older adults to exit homelessness as quickly as possible. They provide expert case management, connections to essential supportive programs, and placement in affordable, stable housing. With the state funding appropriated for the program in 2023, Catholic Charities has cut wait times in half and has doubled successful housing placements, helping more than 300 older adults find their way home.

The Homeless Elders program helps vulnerable older adults regain their independence and frees up emergency shelter resources for other people in need. This is a smart investment in the health of our community, and we strongly urge your action to renew state funding for the program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sean Keefer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Keefer", is placed above the printed name and title.

VP of Government Relations
Ecolab