



Jan 29th, 2025

Chair Lucero, Chair Port, and members of the Committee on Housing and Homelessness Prevention committee:

The Equity in Place Coalition would like to thank this committee for its dedicated work to advancing housing justice for Minnesotans. We oppose **SF 222** because we recognize that renters in Minnesota need stronger protections to have stable and dignified housing.

The proposed legislation will serve as a financial barrier to tenant organizing efforts required to meet the needs of renters. It will have deep impacts in greater Minnesota where tenant-organizing infrastructure is severely lacking adequate funding to meet the needs of their community. Adding cost to organizations by requiring tenant organizers to submit to a background check and provide compensation to a landlord only duplicates a cost for these organizations. Within the housing advocacy ecosystem, it is standard for organizations to require background checks of the organizers they are hiring. Under existing tenant law, non-resident tenant organizers are already required to be invited and accompanied by a resident of any property they organize.

A tenant's ability to seek non-resident tenant organizers for assistance in asserting their rights is vital to ensuring Minnesota has a more stable housing ecosystem. Equipping renters with assistance from non-resident tenant advocates can help them understand their rights and responsibilities and better prepare them to work in a relationship with their landlord and management. This is especially important for non-English speaking tenants who in many cases do not learn about communications from management until they connect with an English speaker who can translate the content of the communication to them, this can result in penalties for these tenants for a barrier they face.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to a more robust conversation on how to advance Minnesota to have a more equitable housing system that will allow us to continue to move toward true housing equity and stability for all Minnesotans.

Equity in Place urges you to vote **NO** on **SF 222**. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

*African Career Education and Resource (ACER)
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of MN
CloseKnit
Community Stabilization Project
COPAL
East Side Freedom Library
Harrison Neighborhood Association*

HOME Line
Hope Community
Housing Justice Center
Jewish Community Action
Minnesota Consortium of Community Developers
Minnesota Youth Collective
MN STEP (Standing Together to End Poverty)
Native American Community Development Institute
New American Development Center
Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association
Pueblos de Lucha y Esperanza MN
Urban Homeworks
West Side Community Organization