



February 13, 2025

To: Chair Port and members of the Senate Housing & Homelessness Prevention Committee

From: Pam Stegora Axberg, CEO of Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities

Chair Port and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities to express our strong support for SF 2214/HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

We use the information from this study as we improve our programs and services for people experiencing homelessness, hunger, and addiction. The information from this study allows us to understand the needs of the community we serve and adjust our services to meet those needs specifically. It also allows us to communicate to our donors the impact of their philanthropy on the very real needs of our area. We have learned through this study vital demographics, details about populations experiencing homelessness, and what it will take to ensure that Minnesota is among the top states in the country addressing homelessness. Should this study end, it would be highly detrimental to our ability to know how we can better serve the community. Put simply, people would fall through the cracks.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities, calls on the committee to pass SF 2214/HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Stegora Axberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Pam Stegora Axberg
CEO, Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities