

Dear Members of the Minnesota Senate Housing and Homeless Prevention Committee:

I'm writing in strong support of SF 2792, representing more than 65 suburban, urban and rural young people, ages 16-24. We gathered at the Minnesota State Capitol on November 23, 2024, as part of the Catalyst for Systems Change Changemakers Project. We discussed and identified our six top priorities for the 2025 legislative session.

Expanding availability of deeply affordable, permanent housing is one of our top priorities.

Many of us have experienced homelessness – some of us are currently do not have a permanent home. We strongly encourage you to commit the maximum possible for this purpose. We would be glad to meet later in the session to share a three minute video some of us, students at the High School for Recording Arts, have produced on the subject of youth experiencing homelessness, with support from the Minnesota Department of Education.

This bill supports an example of service-learning. As one of our members, Jaiden Leary of St Louis Park High School has written,

“Service-learning is an educational approach combines impactful community service with instruction and reflection. It enhances the learning experience while teaching civic responsibility and strengthening local communities. Research has consistently shown that students participating in service learning have increased academic achievement and personal growth. It also develops crucial life skills like leadership, communication and problem solving.”

So we strongly urge support for SF 2792. We very much like “hands-on” active learning, combined with workforce development and creation of affordable housing. This bill will help all three happen.

We very much hope you will include this bill in your Omnibus Bill. Thank you for considering our ideas.

Sha'Micah Hicks for the Changemakers Students