Fairview

February 27, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Health and Human Services Committee Chair
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2107
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Dave Pinto
Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee Chair
503 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Pinto and Senator Wiklund:

I am writing to you in my capacity as Vice President of Community Advancement with Fairview Health Services expressing our strong support for the **Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care Bills –** SF 2033/HF 1686 – supporting those families experiencing homelessness at this critical time of urgent need.

As you know, Ramsey County has seen the number of people experiencing homelessness rising dramatically, nearly doubling since 2016. More than 45 families are on the waiting list for emergency shelter and the 2023 Point-in-Time count conducted on January 25 found well over 300 people were sleeping outside.

One-time funds enabled Heading Home Ramsey and partners to increase shelter capacity and create more effective supports and interventions to move people quickly from homelessness to housing.

Fairview is a member of Heading Home Ramsey and a partner to many organizations committed to making sure homelessness is addressed with quality and dignity. We believe Housing is Health. Your support can continue shelter options for single adults, including expanded women's shelter options, as the need for women's shelter space frequently exceeds the supply.

There is a significant need for outreach, system improvements, and extreme weather support to help address critical immediate needs and move people toward housing more quickly. Also, we need continued operation of day service shelters, supporting individuals to help them stabilize, connect with resources, and move off the street.

We know you share our concern for these families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Sincerely,

John Swanholm,
Vice President, Community Advancement
Fairview Health Services