

3/7/2022

Chair Aisha Gomez

Members of the Preventing Homelessness Division

Dear Chair Gomez and Members of the Preventing Homelessness Division,

The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (MCH) is writing to express support for House File 3568, a bill to modify what counts as income in the Housing Support program.

We use the term “cost burdened” to refer to individuals who pay more than 30% of their income toward housing. Being cost burdened can be a massive strain on financial security and the ability to save. In the Housing Support Program, which is meant to promote stability through housing, enrollees who receive SSI can be forced to pay nearly 90% of their very limited income toward housing. This significant burden results in two options for people experiencing homelessness: lose most of your financial freedom in exchange for housing or remain homeless.

In 80 of our 87 counties, we do not have enough shelter beds to meet the needs of our communities. We need to find creative solutions to reduce the strain on emergency shelters and move people from homelessness into permanent housing.

By putting a 30% cap on SSI as countable income, we can significantly reduce this barrier of exiting homelessness. Rather than trapping people in a cycle of extreme poverty and homelessness, this policy change can encourage saving, promote financial security, and significantly reduce the chance of future homelessness.

Please join us in supporting HF3568 to help promote housing security, financial freedom, and reduce barriers to exiting homelessness.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Otteson
Executive Director