



March 25, 2022

Representative Jennifer Schultz, Chair
House Human Services Finance & Policy Committee
Via electronic delivery

Re: Support for HF3568 (Modifying Housing Support Countable Income)

Chair Gomez and Members of the Committee:

Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) writes to the Committee in support of HF3568, a bill reforming Minnesota's Housing Support program to create stronger pathways to stable housing. We thank Representative Her for her leadership on this issue.

MACV's structure reflects our organizational emphasis on using the Housing First model, which emphasizes that individuals can only make meaningful progress toward long-term stability after securing safe, accessible housing. Our organization offers supportive housing to Veterans who receive benefits including Housing Support, which ensures that Veterans can access settings which accommodate their unique situation. Dozens of Veterans call MACV housing home while they overcome barriers to long-term stability each year. We also offer permanent supportive housing to Veterans who need ongoing services in order to remain housed and off the streets.

Housing Support is an established statewide program that has a proven track record of helping thousands of Minnesotans move out of homelessness and into stable housing each year. Research and experience show that it is one of the state's best tools to support people emerging from homelessness. That said, Housing Support recipients with income are required to make monthly payments toward the cost of their residence. However, the current calculus for determining how much of a Veteran's income "counts," Veterans who receive cash benefits from SSA or the VA can be forced to pay their full benefit toward housing, minus a \$111 personal allowance. This can equate to nearly 90% of their monthly income.

HF3568 would reform Housing Support income calculations to allow those with cash benefits to keep more monthly income. As our state works to address the current housing and homelessness crisis, HF3568 offers a necessary reform to improve outcomes for those in need. Thank you for your consideration, and please contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,


Nathaniel Saltz
Chief Programs Officer
MACV