

ST PAUL

AREA CHAMBER

401 N Robert Street, Suite 150
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MAKING CONNECTIONS THAT COUNT

February 6, 2023

via email

Rep. Liz Olson, Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
479 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

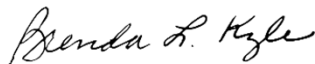
Dear Chair Olson and committee members:

On behalf of the 1700+ members and affiliates of the St. Paul Area Chamber, who together represent more than 3 million employees and their families, thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.F. 444, the Pathway Home Act.

This legislation is urgently needed to respond to the state's homelessness crisis. Public funding for emergency shelters and day services has been woefully inadequate to meet the needs of our unsheltered population. As we enter the coldest months of winter, this cannot be the time that service providers are forced to cut services. The Emergency Services Grant Program (ESP) is the state's most flexible source of emergency shelter funding, and can be efficiently allocated to nonprofits and community service organizations to address urgent needs.

While we certainly need to look for long-term solutions for housing affordability and serving our unsheltered populations in the next state budget, there is no reason not to immediately mobilize these resources to respond to our current emergency. We urge this committee, and the Legislature at large, to support this legislation.

Respectfully,



B Kyle
President & CEO
St. Paul Area Chamber

