



January 24, 2023

Dear Members of the Minnesota House Housing Finance and Policy Committee:

We write in support of HF 319 on comprehensive eviction reform as we know that eviction prevention is homelessness prevention.

At Greater Twin Cities United Way, our mission is to unite changemakers, advocate for social good and develop solutions to address the challenges no one can solve alone. Together with our partners, we touched over 500,000 lives across the nine-county metro area last year. We fund over 100 nonprofits and coalitions through multi-year general operations grants, innovation initiatives and supportive funds directed toward our partners' most pressing needs in the areas of Household Stability, Educational Success and Economic Opportunity.

Unfortunately, too many Minnesotans struggle to keep pace with the rising cost of housing. This makes them vulnerable to falling behind on their rent if a temporary, unexpected expense arises, such as a health issue or car repair. Increasing housing costs amid falling renter incomes puts added strain on 590,000 households that pay more than 30% of their income on housing in every county across the state. These households are just one emergency away from losing their homes with too little time to connect to resources due to our outdated eviction process.

With so many households cost-burdened for rent, more than 18,000 evictions were filed in 2022 in Minnesota. **In 2022, Greater Twin Cities United Way's 211 resource helpline received more than 468,000 calls from Minnesotans. The top reasons people reached out to 211 were for housing, shelter, and utility assistance, which represented 64% of all requests received.** 211 provides critical resources for Minnesotans in times of need. Coupling a 14-day pre-eviction notice with funding for emergency rental assistance and other supports will be crucial to 211 staff in successfully referring callers to resources.

In Minnesota, landlords are not required to provide tenants notice before filing an eviction, which is standard practice in 48 states. As a result, Minnesota has one of the fastest eviction processes in the nation. This does not allow tenants adequate time to seek financial assistance, prepare a defense or secure legal counsel. Additionally, data shows that evictions disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous and People of Color, which can trap renters into a cycle of unsafe, unstable and unaffordable housing. When an eviction is filed, regardless of the final court judgement, it is immediately placed on the tenant's publicly available record for seven years, making it difficult for them to secure housing in the future. **By requiring a formal pre-eviction notice for nonpayment of rent prior to the official filing of an eviction and reforming eviction record expungements and related court procedures, we can better ensure more secure, equitable housing for all Minnesotans.**

Thank you,

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