



April 23, 2021

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Minnesota Multi Housing Association (MHA) respectfully raises our opposition to SF 1470 as amended to align with the language in HF 12, the first engrossment. MHA is an industry nonprofit made up of 1,700 members representing 400,000 housing units in Minnesota.

The proposal provides a 12-month period where a 60-day notice must be given prior to filing an eviction action or terminating a lease for nonpayment. A 60-day notice is twice as long as any other notice period in the United States and over four times longer than any other legislation considered in this body. This is not the best way to ensure broad housing stability.

The best way to ensure stability is to get the rental assistance program running effectively. With \$100 million from CARES Act, \$375 million from the CAA, and approximately another \$200 million from the latest round of federal funding, we clearly have the resources to assist most renters. The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency has these dollars available to them and should efficiently take applications and send checks to landlords.

RentHelpMN.org recently came online and there is unfortunately a realization that owners will not be able to efficiently assist residents with their rental assistance applications. The agency has decided to add unnecessary barriers to application. The most significant issue is the requirement for residents to upload all the documents related to the lease and past due rents. We have urged the Commissioner to adjust the processing. Another complication is residents are required to provide a government-issued identification.

MHA believes the material breach of the lease definition language is unnecessary as this is a term that has been defined already by the courts on a case-by-case basis. We appreciate the general expansion of exemptions to the Executive Order 20-79 but have concerns about the effect of this definition. Additionally, we believe the blanket expungement of eviction actions is too broad.

This proposal is not an off-ramp, it is a series of two cliffs. The first cliff will be when eviction filings are allowed to start the day after enactment for breaches of lease, the second cliff will be 60-days after the end of the Governor's Peacetime Emergency when the bill permits evictions due to nonpayment.

We look forward to continuing to be a resource for the author and members involved in ongoing conversations regarding an eviction and lease termination off-ramp.

Thank you, Madam Chair and members for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Cecil Smith, President and CEO
Minnesota Multi Housing Association