



**MICAH Supports  
\$300 Million for Emergency Rental Assistance  
from the Federal American Rescue Funds**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

My name is Sue Watlov Phillips, Executive Director of MICAHA- Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing, President of National Coalition For The Homeless (NCH). I have worked with people experiencing homelessness for over 54 years. Executive Director, Elim Transitional Housing (1982-2012). I experienced homelessness in the early 1970s.

Over ½ of MICAHA’s Board and staff have experienced homelessness and/or housing crises. 70% of our Board of Directors and Staff are from diverse communities. We work to ensure people who have experienced homelessness, housing crises, and/or housing discrimination are at every decision making table about their lives.

Our faith calls us to be a welcoming community, to love and treat others the way we want to be treated. MICAHA members address the immediate needs of people in our community as we work together to change the structural causes of homelessness/ housing crises and to realize our mission to ensure everyone, without exception, has a safe, decent, accessible home that is affordable.



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RentHelpMN closed on January 28, 2022, with only three days' notice.

Potentially thousands of additional Minnesota Households need Emergency Rental Assistance. Estimates run from \$250 to \$300 million to address the additional rental assistance needs created during the pandemic.

In addition, the closure of RentHelpMN means that thousands of renters will lose the protections of the pandemic-related eviction off-ramp, which prohibits eviction for non-payment of rent until June 2022 if a household has a pending application for emergency rental assistance.

To keep Minnesotans safely housed through June 2022, during ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we ask that RentHelpMN and/ or other State Prevention programs such as the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance (FHPAP) and Community Action Programs be utilized to distribute an additional \$300 million of emergency rental assistance from the American Rescue Plan Act

It is MICAHA’s understanding is that the bipartisan eviction off-ramp legislation, requires the program funding for Emergency Rental Assistance must be authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or Consolidated Appropriations Act.

MICAH and the National Coalition For the Homeless, with other National and State groups, were able to convince the U.S. Treasury to allow us to use Emergency Rental Assistance to pay 3-6 months of rent for people experiencing homelessness in shelters who found a landlord that would give them a lease. We hope this provision will be included in this legislation too!

God's peace,  
Sue Watlov Phillips, M.A.  
Executive Director MICAH  
President, National Coalition For The Homeless

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