



CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
Twin Cities

**Catholic Charities at Elliot Park**  
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April 15, 2024

Representative Mohamud Noor, Chair  
House Human Services Finance Committee

**RE: Human Services Omnibus Bill (HF5280 DE1)**

Chair Noor and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Catholic Charities Twin Cities, I write to thank you for your ongoing commitment to identifying long-term solutions to Minnesota's housing and homelessness crisis, and for the provisions included in the DE to HF5280 that provide opportunities to strengthen services for our neighbors in need.

Your leadership in the 2023 legislative session contributed to historic investments and reforms for homelessness and supportive housing, yet we know there is more work to be done. Thousands of individuals across the state are still in crisis and in need of help now, and there are additional reforms the state can explore to streamline and simplify programs, with a focus on improving health and housing outcomes.

As a leading provider of emergency shelter, housing, and direct services, Catholic Charities sees evidence of these needs every day. We serve more than 25,000 youth and adults annually, with more than half of these individuals seeking services through our emergency overnight and daytime shelter programs, and more than 5,000 requesting help through our shelter diversion programs. We also support more than 1,100 individuals in maintaining safe, stable affordable housing through permanent supportive housing programs, which receive referrals from local coordinated entry systems.

The focused and strategic investments proposed in HF5280 will ensure Minnesota continues to build upon, innovate, and reform its human services programs to better meet the needs of those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including:

- Directing DHS to develop a strategy to address unmet health-related social needs, including the possibility of pursuing Section 1115 federal waivers;
- Establishing a working group on simplifying supportive housing resources; and
- The establishment of a Human Services Response Contingency Account.

We look forward to working with you to advance these proposals this session. Together we can make experiences of homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, and create more opportunities for people to thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorna Schmidt".

Lorna Schmidt  
Vice President, Public Policy & Government Affairs  
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