



AMHERST H.
WILDER
FOUNDATION

ESTABLISHED 1906

Here for good.

www.wilder.org

May 1, 2021

Representative Alice Hausman, Co-Chair Housing Conference Committee

Senator Rich Draheim, Co-chair Housing Conference Committee

Members of the 2021 Housing Conference Committee,

On behalf of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation a direct service and research organization serving the east metro since 1906, I would like to provide our perspective on the opportunities and concerns as you begin your conference committee negotiations.

Support

Bridges Rental Assistance – As a provider of behavioral health services and affordable housing services, we are well positioned to recognize the importance of stable housing to support our behavioral health. We strongly support the base increase to the oversubscribed Bridges program included in the House position to help ensure that more people transitioning back into the community from inpatient settings have stable housing as a solid foundation.

Homework Starts with Home – There is a clear link between housing instability and reductions in academic performance and attendance. Wilder has been a part of the Homework Starts with Home program since it was a pilot program. We support the base increase to the program in the House bill, so the state can expand access to this program to more communities and help ensure our students are able to focus on learning and not where they will lay their head tonight.

Eviction Moratorium – During a pandemic which requires us to maintain separation and devastated the finances of low-income people, the establishment of an eviction moratorium has been an essential too. It has helped to keep people healthy and stable,

while waiting for financial assistance to come on line. We remain concerned about the long-term impacts that a wave of evictions could have on the ability of people to obtain and maintain stable housing. As a member of the Homes for All coalition, we support the eviction off-ramp framework laid out by the coalition.

This past year has illuminated how much work we have remaining across the housing continuum. We have seen more unsheltered homelessness than ever before at the same time that we see skyrocketing home prices for prospective buyers. We appreciate all of the work done thus far to put together the House and Senate positions and look forward to working with you to create a final housing budget package that will help all Minnesotans to achieve safe and stable housing.

Best regards,

Nona Ferguson

Vice President – Economic Assistance & Aging Services