



MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Representative Igo, Chair
Housing Finance and Policy
March 11, 2025

Chair Igo and Housing Finance and Policy Committee Members,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, MN Chapter (NASW-MN), we are writing in HF1987, the Minnesota Starter Home Act.

NASW-MN is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in our state, representing about 2000 social workers. The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. We are called to examine and address forces that negatively impact a person's environment (NASW Code of Ethics).

As you can imagine, social workers are often in spaces with clients with insecure housing, and we know that securing housing is the first step in resolving other crises. For example, unstable housing prevents family reunification, contributes to poor academic outcomes, adds anxiety and stress to clients living with mental illness, and is a deterrent to those who want to leave violent households.

We believe that shelter is a basic need, and every human deserves the dignity of housing.

NASW-MN joined the Yes to Home! coalition because we believe that transforming current practices is necessary to address the housing crisis in Minnesota. The Minnesota Starter Home Act is one of several immediate policy actions we can take to make it easier to develop housing in every community. We need to build smaller homes and duplexes in new developments and re-developments across our state in order to serve the wide variety of housing needs across the state.

We appreciate your service and work on this important issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Goodenough, PhD, LGSW
Executive Director
NASW-MN

Jenny Arneson, MSW, LGSW
Legislative Consultant
NASW-MN