

March 11, 2026

Housing Finance and Policy Committee:

My name is Gina Washburn. I am a retired attorney and Chair of the First United Church of Christ Immigrant Welcoming Ministry. Since April 2022 I have been a community advocate working with residents of the Viking Terrace Mobile Home Park in Northfield Minnesota.

This park, privately owned for decades, was purchased by a Florida corporation, Lakeshore Management, despite concerted efforts by park residents and advocates to effect purchase to convert the park into a resident owned community (ROC) with the leadership and expertise of CoNorth Housing Cooperative. Because Minnesota law does not provide an opportunity to purchase as contained in HF 2381, the sale of the park was a foregone conclusion exempting the longtime residents of a critical opportunity to self-govern and maintain affordability and livability of their neighborhood.

In the intervening years, Lakeshore Management has annually increased lot rent and imposed highly restrictive rules resulting in evictions for homeowners that cannot move their once “mobile” homes. Over this same time, Lakeshore has made no substantial improvements to the park in terms of infrastructure – water, sewer, roads, etc. Intervention by the Minnesota Attorney General and City of Northfield has been required to force compliance with state law and local ordinances.

Opposition to HF2381 has centered on the specious argument that limitations on rent increases will “stifle development”. Data shows that there has been NO “development” of manufactured home parks in decades. Minnesota’s mobile and manufactured home parks are a bastion of affordable housing that deserves our legislature’s support and protection against out of state corporations’ predatory practices against a vulnerable population.

I am confident that the members of the Housing Finance and Policy Committee will respect the lives of these residents, their commitment to work and live in our community to pass HF2381.

Sincerely,

Gina G. Washburn

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