



Community Action Center

January 17, 2023

Chair Noor

Members of the Human Services Finance Committee

Dear Chair Noor and members of the Human Services Finance committee,

The Community Action Center (CAC) is writing to express its strong support for the Pathway Home Act bill (HF444). CAC has been providing housing services in Rice County for over 50 years. Every year CAC partners with more than 300 local families on housing issues.

CAC can confidently say that shelter space saves lives and more housing means less homelessness. Although we support HF444 overall, we also wish to single out three particularly important items.

- 1) \$150 million for emergency shelter facilities.

CAC was heartened to learn that HF444 includes \$150 million for emergency shelters. These funds are sorely needed. According to the Homelessness Management Information System, 90% of MN counties have either no shelter beds or have too few to meet local needs. In Rice County, the city of Faribault has no emergency shelter facilities, in spite of the fact that the town has a 13.1% poverty rate and a miniscule 0.4% vacancy rate among the affordable/subsidized properties (according to the city's most recent housing report).

- 2) \$40 million in 2024/25 and \$70 million in 2026/27 for Emergency Services Program (ESP)

This funding will allow CAC and other organizations to meet the needs of households experiencing a homelessness crisis. This funding will support shelters, outreach programs, motel vouchers, and many other resources. By supporting both new and existing shelters, HF444 will prevent thousands of nights of homelessness each year.

- 3) \$9 million for the Transitional Housing Program (THP)

HF444 also includes much-needed funding for THP, which is essential for individuals and households leaving shelters. By helping people find stable housing and develop a good rental history, THP puts them on the road to a permanent housing destination.

CAC applauds the leadership for bringing forward the Pathway Home Act. If passed, it will reduce homelessness and save lives.



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Sincerely,

Paul Gleason

Grant Manager, Community Action Center