



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

January 18, 2023

Human Service Finance Committee
Chair Representative Mohamud Noor
State Office Building, Room 200

Human Services Finance Committee members:

On behalf of our team at YMCA of the North and all the youth we serve, I am writing to express our deep gratitude for the resources the Legislature has devoted to helping youth leave dangerous situations and find stability through the Homeless Youth Act.

At the YMCA, we have served youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness for over 30 years. Funding provided through HYA has played a crucial role in our ability to help young Minnesotans find stable housing, reconnect with school, work, and community, and thrive.

Last year, with your help, our Outreach team made over 3,200 contacts with youth living in cars, in encampments, and in unsafe, precarious housing situations, offering each of them food, water, warm clothing, and resources to find and maintain stable housing. Eighty-six youth found help and hope through our Safe StaY program, which pairs safe shelter in motels and hotels with intensive help finding and maintaining permanent housing.

HYA funding also helped us leverage additional federal, county, and private resources to support programs that provide transitional housing to nearly 200 youth each year, with some spaces specifically designed for youth who have sexual exploitation or trafficking, who can connect with healing and supportive services through other YMCA programs.

As proud as we are of what we've done to date, we also recognize that we are only meeting a portion of the need. That is why we strongly support your efforts to expand the HYA with the Pathway Home Act. The additional funding the Pathway Home Act will make available will help us meet more of the tremendous need for services to help youth find a path toward stable housing and self-sufficient thriving. In addition, the Act's investments in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) will help agencies like the Y collect and analyze data on our programs. Accurate data helps us continuously improve our programs for maximum impact and ensure that we are serving all youth in need equitably.

The energy and enthusiasm behind the Pathway Home Act are inspiring to all of us here at the Y. Once again, thank you for your support of this bill, which offers support, resources, and a pathway home to our state's most vulnerable youth.

If you have any questions at all about our work at the YMCA, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Glen Gunderson
President, YMCA of the North

YMCA OF THE NORTH

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