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Regarding: SF4410 (HHS Omnibus) & Housing Support

Dear Conference Committee Members,

As you meet to negotiate a supplemental HHS omnibus bill, I'd like to call attention to the critical Housing Support reform proposed by the House (Article 18, Sec. 4) and urge your support to include this bipartisan provision in your final HHS conference committee report. Our organization, Align Minneapolis, is an interfaith coalition of 17 member congregations working to address homelessness together. We listen to the voices of people with lived experiences of homelessness to inform our work and the group Street Voices of Change (a group of people with lived experiences of homelessness) has identified that Housing Support needs to change. Street Voices of Change members summarized:

"Housing Support as the program is today keeps people in homelessness or deters people from accessing housing because too much of a person's income is taken for housing. Additionally, no renter's credit is given, the program can be abusive, corrupt, and takes away our agency and ability to build savings to possibly purchase a car or a home of our own. The way this program is set up currently is not effective at ending homelessness."

Including Housing Support countable income modified in the final HHS conference committee report will ensure an important adjustment so people on limited income such as SSI or Veteran's Benefits will only pay 30% of their income to housing, rather than up to 90% they pay now. This needed change will help more people who are experiencing homelessness access housing that is affordable. Please include the House position to reform Housing Support income calculations in the final HHS omnibus bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Dillon, Director of Align Minneapolis