May 2, 2023

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Honorable Melissa WiklundChair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee2107 Minnesota Senate Building90 University AvenueSt. Paul, MN 55155 | The Honorable Tina Liebling Chair, House Health Finance and Policy Committee477 State Office Building100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155 |

Dear Chair Wiklund and Chair Liebling, and members of the Health and Human Services Conference Committee:

On behalf of Avivo and our Ending Homelessness Division specifically, I write to express our support for SF2995, the Health and Human Services Omnibus bill.

This bill provides critical support to address the Opioid Epidemic with all its related consequences. Specifically, providing culturally-specific services for our most vulnerable communities, including people experiencing homelessness; increased funding for syringe service programs and creation of Overdose Prevention Hubs; critical monitoring of the illicit drug supply by the MDH Public Health Lab; and preventing and treating substance use disorder (SUD) in pregnant and post-partum women and neonatal abstinence syndrome in infants.

Daily at Avivo, we are working with numerous individuals who are dealing with SUD and, particularly OUD. We are on the frontlines and are frequently working with individuals who are overdosing. We have seen many individuals we work with die from the impact of Overdoses and SUD. This funding will provide critical support to ensure that we are able to mitigate the impact of SUD. Many of our clients are HIV positive or at elevated risk of HIV and/or other disease infection. We MUST do better to mitigate and address the needs in our community by supporting those who are the most vulnerable. Sadly, the recent MDH Mortality Report only confirms what we have known for years – that people experiencing homelessness, especially BIPOC communities, are at greatly increased risk for death and disease. This bill will make significant strides to address these critical concerns in our community.

I look forward to working with you during the conference committee process as a resource to you in assembling your final bill. Please contact me at (612) 867 2026 or john.tribbett@avivomn.org if I can be of assistance to the committee.

Sincerely,

John Tribbett

Service Area Director, Ending Homelessness Division

Avivo

Cc: Sen. Jim Abeler, Ranking Minority, Senate Human Services Committee

Sen. Liz Boldon, Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Sen. Robert Kupec, Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Sen. Kelly Morrison, Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Rep. Robert Bierman, Vice Chair, House Health Finance and Policy Committee

Rep. Heather Keeler, Vice Chair, House Children and Families Finance and Policy

Rep. Dave Pinto, Chair, House Children and Families Finance and Policy

Rep. Joe Schomacker, Republican Lead, House Health Finance and Policy Committee

Commissioner Brooke Cunningham, Minnesota Department of Health