

Chair Port, Chair Igo, Chair Howard and Members of the 2025 Housing Conference Committee,

Dear Members of the Housing Conference Committee,

Generations of Black Minnesotans have been locked out of stability, wealth, and opportunity—not by accident, but by design. Redlining, racially restrictive covenants, and decades of disinvestment didn't just happen. They were deliberate policy choices.

Today, we understand you're facing difficult budget negotiations in a hyper-partisan environment. We don't envy that challenge. But we do believe you have the tools—and the opportunity—to make a different kind of choice: one that begins to repair what was broken on purpose.

While we understand that the African American Workforce and Affordable Homeownership Development Program ([SF 2423/HF2507](#)) did not make the final list of budget priorities this session, we urge you not to let this issue fall off the radar. This program represents a direct response to a man-made problem—one that continues to exclude Black Minnesotans from wealth-building and housing stability.

During your tenure, we ask that you commit to addressing the structural harms that programs like this are designed to fix. That means lifting up community-led solutions, investing in Black workers and developers, and creating pathways to homeownership that center those who've historically been locked out.

The program would:

- Provide grants to cities, tribes, nonprofits, and community land trusts;
- Support land acquisition, rehab, environmental cleanup, and home construction;
- Fund job training and business development for African American workers and entrepreneurs;
- Serve households at or below 80% of the state median income;
- Require consultation with African American stakeholders through the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage.

This isn't just a housing proposal—it's a framework for economic justice. The racial homeownership gap in Minnesota is among the worst in the country. The consequences are generational. But so is the potential for impact.

**The problem was policy-created. The solution can be, too.**

Please partner with trusted community organizations like the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless and others doing this work—and keep this issue in your sights as you continue your service.

Sincerely,

*Matt Traynor*

Matt Traynor, Interim Executive Director, MN Coalition for the Homeless

*LaQuita Love-Limo*

LaQuita Love-Limo, Policy/Advocacy Fellow, MN Coalition for the Homeless