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March 21, 2023

Representative Pinto and Members
Chair of the Committee on Children and Families Finance and Policy

Re: HF 135 – Feist: Hennepin County; persons experiencing homelessness funding provided, and money appropriated

Dear Chair Pinto and Members,

The City of Minneapolis appreciates the opportunity to comment in support of HF 135.

In 2020 and 2021, the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County and their partners invested more than \$200 million in homelessness response to expand emergency shelter, low-barrier housing and protective housing for people experiencing homelessness, as well as to enhance existing shelters and expand support services, rapid rehousing, and street outreach. The City's share of these investments was \$17 million. The City has also committed more than \$45.5 million for housing and homelessness response, made possible by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

The investments that the City, County and State have made together have significantly improved the existing shelter system. Shelters now operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week. They are healthier, thanks to capital improvements. There are more housing focused case managers serving both people in shelters and people who are unsheltered. We have three new, low barrier and culturally specific shelters designed to meet needs identified by persons with lived experience of homelessness.

The funding in HF 135 is critical to ensuring that these improvements in the homeless response system continue for the long-term. Targeted funding is needed for ongoing shelter operations and homeless response in Minneapolis and Hennepin County to ensure that we have no gaps into the future, including:

- Continued operations and services for Avivo Villages low-barrier 100 dwelling units and coordinated support services and American Indian Community Development Corporation Homeward Bound 50 bed shelter providing culturally specific services for the Native American community.
- Continued 24/7 shelter operations
- Continued Housing-focused case management and shelter diversion
- Capital needs for shovel-ready shelter/housing projects

Homelessness is a statewide issue. The City of Minneapolis, in partnership with Hennepin County, is more than willing to do its part in meeting the needs of those who are unhoused, but we cannot do it without continued support from the State of Minnesota. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this important legislation.

Yours Truly,

Mayor Jacob Frey,
City of Minneapolis