

March 13, 2023

Representative Aisha Gomez, Chair
House Taxes Committee
453 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Gomez and Members of the House Tax Committee,

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) represents fifteen of Minnesota's larger and faster growing counties, including four suburban and eleven Greater Minnesota counties.

MICA supports HF1419, authored by Representative Howard, to provide annual formula-based Local Affordable Housing Aid to counties and eligible cities.

Increased investment in affordable and workforce housing is a critical need in communities across the state. The proposed new aid program provides predictable and flexible funding to allow county governments and their local partners to tailor housing solutions to the needs of individual communities.

While local housing needs can vary by region – such as depending on local economic and employment conditions and the make-up of existing housing stock—what is common is that the best solutions typically require collaboration among multiple public and private partners. As such, we appreciate the flexibility provided by HF1419 to consider direct assistance at the targeted income levels to help prevent foreclosure or eviction, preservation of existing affordable housing, and creation of new, permanent, affordable housing for renters or homeowners or other solutions.

We also appreciate the inclusion of accountability measures that provide an incentive for timely use of the funds within a limited time period to expand housing options for renters and homeowners, while also allowing unspent funds to be deposited into a [Housing Trust Fund Account](#) under certain conditions.

We recognize that consistent funding provided by HF1419 will also broaden expectations for county governments lead planned, long-term, and sustainable housing strategies. As the bill moves forward, we respectfully request the Committee to allow for local program administration costs to be funded, and to continue to also prioritize broad-based property tax relief strategies that help moderate the cost of housing and local services.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share our support for HF1419.

Sincerely,



Matt Massman, Executive Director
Minnesota Inter-County Association