



1220 Zane Avenue North
Golden Valley, MN 55422
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prismmpls.org

May 4, 2022

Chair Alice Hausman
453 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Mike Sundin
417 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Tama Theis
201 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Vice Chair Michael Howard
451 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Vice Chair Samantha Vang
527 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF 4366 – Omnibus agriculture and housing bill

Dear Members of the Housing/Agriculture House Conference Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the People Responding in Social Ministry (PRISM) Advocacy Committee, which is made up of our Board of Directors and PRISM staff. PRISM is a non-profit that was founded in 1970 by folks in the local faith communities who were concerned about local hungry and homeless families. What started as a small, informal effort has since evolved into a strong, sustainable organization which is considered a leading provider of basic needs services in the northwest Twin Cities suburbs. We see hundreds of families each week walk through our doors seeking food, rental assistance, and other support services.

Housing insecurity and lack of affordable housing is a huge issue for the people we serve. In 2021 PRISM was able to disperse over 1.7 million dollars to property owners/landlords in our community, preventing homelessness and trauma for 612 families in the NW suburbs. 86% of the funding we used was through CARES/RenthelpMN and it felt like we were finally able to meet the needs of our community. This financial assistance is critical to maintaining healthy stable cities-for both the tenants and the property owners. Wages are not keeping up with rising rents, and when a household experiences even a small financial setback their housing could be in jeopardy. It is critical that we continue to be able to serve as a safety net.

In direct reference to the work we do on a daily basis, we strongly support HF 4366 and it's \$415 million dollar investment in Minnesota housing. The Community Stabilization/Preserving NOAH funds will go a long way in the NW suburbs, where many older, naturally affordable buildings are at risk of losing to luxury housing developers. The loss of this housing will have a significant impact on the BIPOC community. Minnesota is in the bottom five in the United States when it comes to racial disparities in homeownership.

BUILDING HEALTHY, STABLE LIVES



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With the eviction moratorium phase out coming up very soon, we know that this housing bill will provide people across the state of Minnesota with housing stability. The needs are currently great, and growing-inflation continues to have an effect on the resiliency of the families we serve. PRISM is grateful for your consideration and please reach out to Executive Director Michelle Ness if you would like more information on how this bill moving forward will affect the people we serve via these funds and you serve in the legislature.

Sincerely,

Michelle Ness, PRISM Executive Director
On behalf of PRISM

Katherine M. Knowles
On behalf of PRISM Board of Directors

Identical letter sent to:

Cc: Office of Governor Walz & Lt. Governor Peggy Flannagan