



2355 Fairview Ave #139, Roseville, MN 55113
www.metrodoctors.com | 612-623-2885

The mission of the Twin Cities Medical Society is to connect, represent, and engage physicians in improving the practice of medicine, policy development and public health initiatives.

Representative Jennifer Schultz, Chair, Human Services Finance and Policy
Via Electronic Delivery

February 3rd, 2021

Re: Support for H.F. 42 and H.F. 315 (COVID-19 Relief for Emergency Shelters and Housing Support)

Chair Schultz, Vice Chair Bahner, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Twin Cities Medical Society in support of H.F. 42 and H.F. 315, the proposed bills to further support Minnesotans experiencing or at risk of homelessness across the state during the COVID19 pandemic. Twin Cities Medical Society (TCMS) is an organization that represents over 4,500 physicians and medical students living and working in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Our physician members are all too familiar with the disproportionate health risks and disparities that Minnesotans at risk of homelessness experience. The ongoing pandemic only serves to exacerbate these already significant risks. TCMS and its members believe that housing *is* health, and that access to safe and stable housing is crucial in being able to address any other ongoing needs, including medical treatment. A one-time investment of \$17.5 million to support the Emergency Services Program (ESP) through H.F. 42 is key in helping provide people with dignified shelter, access to supportive-services, and life-saving services during COVID19. Additionally, H.F. 315 would provide longer-term funding that is imperative to sustaining ESP into the future and helping to further address homelessness in Minnesota.

Any number of people experiencing homelessness is too high, but that nearly 8,000 Minnesotans experience homelessness on any given night is unconscionable. This number also disproportionately represents people of color, as more than 60% of those experience homelessness are Black, Indigenous, and people of color¹. Housing, health and safety, and racial justice are issues that are intertwined and cannot be separated from each other. TCMS thanks you for considering these important bills and urges you to support them in your committee.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Traxler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sarah Traxler, MD
President of the Twin Cities Medical Society

¹Catholic Charities Twin Cities. (2021). Unsheltered in Minnesota.[Fact sheet].