



February 27, 2023

Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee Chair: Representative Dave Pinto  
Health and Human Services Committee Chair: Senator Melissa Wiklund

Dear Senator Wiklund and Representative Pinto:

We are writing to you in our capacity as co-directors of the Saint Paul Children's Collaborative (SPCC). We are expressing the SPCC's strong support for the **Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care Bills** – [SF 2033/HF 1686](#) – which will support families experiencing homelessness at this critical time of urgent need.

Ramsey County has seen the number of people experiencing homelessness rising dramatically - nearly doubling since 2016. More than 45 families are on the waiting list for emergency shelter, and the 2023 Point-in-Time count conducted on January 25 found well over 300 people were sleeping outside.

The mission of the Saint Paul Children's Collaborative is to engage policy-makers, communities, business, nonprofits, and other stakeholders to strengthen the social and economic fabric of Saint Paul to support the healthy development of children and youth. We recognize that safe and affordable housing is critical for families and children to thrive. Most of our funding goes to support community-based providers of out-of-school time programming for diverse Saint Paul young people and families. These providers know how critical stable housing is to engaging youth in these programs, which will help them to be more successful in school and life. Programs like Interfaith Action's Project Home help to stabilize families, which allows their children to participate in crucial continuous schooling and activities and other needed interventions and services.

Heading Home Ramsey's request for \$75 million will fund five critical interventions:

- 100-bed shelter for families and additional support for families. Established during the pandemic, this model has produced significantly improved outcomes for families, moving them into housing more quickly.
- Continued shelter options for single adults, including expanded women's shelter options. The need for women's shelter space frequently exceeds the supply.
- Continued operation of day service shelters, supporting individuals to help them stabilize, connect with resources, and move off the street.

- A low-barrier pilot program serving frequent users of emergency shelters with intensive, 24/7 staffing.
- Outreach, system improvements, and extreme weather support to help address critical immediate needs and move people toward housing more quickly.

We know you share our concern for these families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Sincerely,



Nicole MartinRogers  
Co-director



Laurie Davis  
Co-director