

# Minnesota Chapter

INCORPORATED IN MINNESOTA

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



## Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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April 4, 2022

Minnesota House of Representatives Housing Finance and Policy Committee  
State Office Building  
100 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard  
St. Paul, MN 55103

Rep. Hausman and members of the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MNAAP), I am writing in support of provisions in the Omnibus Housing Finance and Policy Bill that would provide additional resources for the Homework Starts with Home Program. Our Chapter, which represents over 1,000 pediatricians around the state, is acutely aware of the importance of stable housing and its impact on the development and wellbeing of our children and youth. Without stable housing, these children and youth are at risk of not only suffering emotionally and mentally from the stress of not knowing where their family and they will sleep and live, but also being unable to learn and develop. It is estimated that around 8,000 school-age children in Minnesota are homeless or in a state of constant changes in living situation on any day. This problem is widespread in our state and includes children in close to 90% of all Minnesota counties.

The provisions providing additional resources for the Homework Starts with Home Program will assist families and youth who are not only facing homelessness, but also for those families that are having to move frequently or are living in overcrowded conditions. It would assist youths who are leaving foster care or juvenile detention facilities. The additional funding would also provide rent and other housing assistance to families who are expecting a child.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheldon Berkowitz, MD, FAAP".

Sheldon Berkowitz, MD, FAAP  
President, Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics