

Sent Via Email

March 20, 2024

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

Chair Gomez,

On behalf of the Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA), which represents 15 of Minnesota's larger and faster growing counties, thank you for authoring the creation in 2021 of Local Homeless Prevention Aid and for reviewing the implementation of the aid to date.

Student homelessness is a statewide concern, and Local Homeless Prevention Aid provides important resources to help keep families together and youth in school. Based on 2023 school data, nearly 25 percent of students experiencing homelessness live in MICA member counties. We write to share additional examples of how this aid is being used to help families in several counties.

- Olmsted County used 2023 funds to provide emergency assistance to 129 families, temporary hotel housing for 28 families (141 individuals) at risk of long-term homelessness and imbedded two social workers within Olmsted County schools to assist 47 families (141 individuals), working an eviction clinic to help families at-risk of homelessness.
- Dakota County has used the funds to provide services and flexible financial assistance to keep families in their homes and to undertake outreach and case management services in schools in Dakota County.
- Rice County is using it's funding to provide direct financial assistance for housing through a contract with Three Rivers CAC, including for justice-involved families working with community-based care coordinators where those individuals may otherwise be ineligible for housing assistance funds.

Counties universally appreciate flexibility, using the funds to help ensure no child is homeless by keeping families from losing housing and helping those experiencing homelessness find housing and remain in school.

The one modification suggested by a MICA-member county is to consider moving the due date of reporting from December 31 to January 31, to better align with reporting on activity for a full county fiscal year.

Again, thank you for championing this funding and its effective implementation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matt Massman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matt Massman, *Executive Director*
Minnesota Inter-County Association