

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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January 19, 2023

Human Services Finance Committee
State Office Building
100 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55155

Members of the Human Services Finance Committee,

On behalf of the over 1,000 pediatrician members of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MNAAP), I am writing in support of HF 444, the Pathway Home Act.

This bill seeks to reduce the number of Minnesota's children and adolescents experience homelessness. Child and adolescent health is heavily influenced by the conditions in which children cannot control. Homelessness is one of these conditions. A lack of stable housing can have serious long-term effects on a child or adolescent's health, wellbeing, and physical and mental development.

For many of Minnesota's children and adolescents, homelessness or unstable housing is an everyday reality. Homelessness is associated with severe negative health outcomes, including shorter life expectancy and higher morbidity rates. Those experiencing homelessness are also less likely to access preventive health services and experience higher rates of chronic disease.

Additionally, studies have shown that people experiencing homelessness are predisposed to worse health outcomes, and more likely to suffer from other social drivers of health such as food insecurity and unstable employment. The multitude of social drivers of health can compound, making a healthy lifestyle extremely difficult for patients in that situation.

People experiencing homelessness are already among the most vulnerable groups in our society - children and adolescents especially. Minnesota's most marginalized communities have been most affected as a disproportionate number of individuals that are experiencing homelessness in Minnesota identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

The Pathway Home Act is a positive step towards helping our youngest Minnesotans secure stable housing, working to address an impactful social driver of health. MNAAP greatly appreciates the significant investment this bill puts into the next generation of Minnesotans and asks members support HF444.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eileen Crespo".

Eileen Crespo, MD, FAAP
President, Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics