

Dear Chair, Rep Jay Xiong, Vice Chair, Rep Jeff Brand, and members of the Minnesotan House Workforce and Development Finance and Policy Committee

I am actively promoting Youthbuild (HF2492) for the following reasons: As a cardiologist, I know that you and I are healthy not so much because of the health services that I provide, but because we have an education, and with that education we can generate adequate income.

When a homeless young person is given an opportunity to participate in Youthbuild they get that education and their life expectancy deficit of 20 to 30 years is erased. Youthbuild puts them on a path to health and well-being.

In addition to providing low cost home ownership opportunities for low income families:

- The Youthbuild participant earns a high school diploma or GED. Essential building blocks for health
- The Youthbuild participant enters a training and employment stream that provides them with an opportunity to earn a respectable income, also an essential building block for health.
- Not to be overlooked, the Youthbuild participant will be acquiring the skills that give them *respect, dignity, meaning and purpose*—critical building blocks for well-being that homeless youth lack.

After participating in Youthbuild, a young person will be able to drive by a home and say, “I built that! I made it possible for that family to own a home! I contributed to my community! The power of these words to create well-being cannot be overstated.

Please fund Youthbuild as in HF1492. You will not only increase the stock of low cost, high quality housing, you will change, for the better and forever, the lives of young men and women.

Thank you.

Thomas E. Kottke, MD, MSPH

571 Otis Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55104

Home: 651 330 4782

Mobile: 612 240 5811

