

April 7, 2026

Chair Howard, Chair Igo, and Members of the Housing Finance and Policy Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Rep. Norris' HF 1417, appropriating money for manufactured home park infrastructure grants and loans.

Minnesota Realtors® (MNR) was founded in 1919 and is a business trade association with more than 21,500 members statewide working with buyers and sellers of all types of property and at all price points.

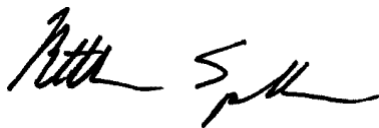
Manufactured home parks contain a vital source of naturally occurring affordable housing and many of these communities are facing aging infrastructure that can be costly to repair or replace. The funding in HF 1417 would help ensure existing manufactured home parks can make necessary infrastructure improvements without placing an additional financial burden on residents.

The meaningful investments made in HF 1417 will help preserve Minnesota's manufactured home communities and support long-term stability for one of our state's most affordable housing types.

Another important feature of this bill is the inclusion of strong accountability measures through annual reporting requirements. These provisions will give legislators clear insight into how funds are distributed, the average amount of loans, and information regarding terms of loans issued.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HF 1417.

Sincerely,



Matt Spellman
Senior Director of Advocacy
Minnesota Realtors®

Testimony in Support of HF 1417, HF 1879, HF 2462 and HF 3279

Proposed Solutions From a Minnesota Youth.

By Avery Messina

I am a student from Lakes International Language Academy, a public charter school in Forest Lake, Minnesota. I have recently become a member of Catalyst for Systems Change (CSC) a youth coalition that aims to work in tandem with both kids and legislators to create direct and meaningful impact in the lives of youth around the state.

This past school year, I have had the opportunity to work with kids from all over the state, to meet people of all different walks and runs of life. I've gotten to hold conversations with legislators, leaders of successful organizations and companies, I've emailed and met with so many different people. This program has not only broadened my perspective of the world, but allowed me to realize the full potential I, and anyone else, can have in the world. I learned that even as a student with no influence, I could create meaningful change by working with the people around me and by working hard.

While working through the program, a common goal we agreed upon was the homelessness crisis in Minnesota. I learned that while youth homelessness was not new to the Twin Cities, or Minnesota as a whole, it had become increasingly more prevalent over the decades. From 2018-2025 alone, the population of Minnesota children, youth and teen homelessness had increased by 30%. (High School for Recording Arts, 2025) Youth in Minnesota currently make up around 46% of the homeless population. An estimated 13,300 youth experience unaccompanied homelessness in the course of a year, with 5,800 of them being minors 17 and under. These numbers were highly disproportionate to the amount of housing being offered in Minnesota for youth experiencing homelessness. While shelters were considered crucial for homeless teens as they provide safety and necessities such as food, clothing, and showers, in Hennepin County, there were currently only 85 emergency shelter beds, and 200 rapid rehousing/transitional housing beds, 20 host homes, and 181 non-timelimited permanent supporting housing units specifically for youth. Even then, many youth speak of their aversion to shelters because of their lack of security.

Myself and another young woman I met through the program, Charley Cheatham, drafted a memo proposing a solution to the youth homelessness and domestic violence crisis plaguing Minnesota and the Twin Cities. We proposed several ideas:

That given the increase in number of Minnesota children and youth experiencing homelessness, the 2026 Minnesota Legislature take several steps, beginning with authorizing a pilot program through the Department of Human Services and Housing Finance Agency to identify, renovate, and repurpose vacant buildings into homeless

shelters and affordable housing for youth experiencing domestic violence, with dedicated funding allocated in the next state budget cycle.

We also proposed that these shelters must comply with the current standards under Chapter 245D of the 2025 Department of Human Services Statute as well as HF2636, which outlaws discrimination in shelters based on race, gender, age, or economic status.

In addition, we asked that these shelters provide translators for youth who do not primarily speak English, as that is often a barrier for youth seeking shelter.

We believed that this plan would serve as a backbone for teens struggling with homelessness, and work as a catalyst for them to succeed in life. We also urged use of Minnesota's bonding capabilities to invest in permanent, deeply affordable housings and in responsibility reducing "red tape" that makes constructing affordable housing in Minnesota communities.

In summary, our idea was to use what was already there and turn it into a solution. The Twin Cities is littered with abandoned buildings and empty spaces, meanwhile too many children don't have a safe space to sleep at night. There is no perfect solution to the problems faced everyday by Minnesota citizens, but there are steps we can take towards one.

Today, I am urging all of you to take one of those steps forward towards that solution. Because the children of Minnesota are depending on you to do so.