



March 7, 2022

Dear Members of the Minnesota House Housing Finance and Policy Committee:

We write in support of HF 3143 to expand the eligible use of Housing Infrastructure Bonds for the construction and preservation of affordable housing.

At Greater Twin Cities United Way, our mission is to build pathways toward prosperity and equity for all, touching over 500,000 lives across the 9-county metro area. We fund over 95 direct service organizations and coalitions through grantmaking across our three impact areas of Household Stability, Educational Success and Economic Opportunity. Above all, we know a stable home provides the critical foundation that all Minnesotans need to thrive, supporting better health, education and employment outcomes.

Increasing expenses amid stagnant or falling renter incomes puts added strain on the more than 554,000 cost-burdened households who pay more than 30% of their income on housing in every county across the state. Renter incomes increased by 1% between 2000 and 2019, yet median gross rents rose disproportionately by 14%, leaving many families with a growing financial challenge to maintain safe, stable housing.

With rapidly diminishing access to homes affordable to people with low to moderate incomes, nearly 20,000 individuals and families experience homelessness on any given night - in every region across the state. Additionally, due to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic, we saw these needs became even more urgent and widespread. **In 2021, Greater Twin Cities United Way's 2-1-1 resource helpline received more than 485,000 calls related to housing needs, representing 60% of all resource requests received.**

Greater Twin Cities United Way supports the preservation and expansion of access to affordable housing through strategic bonding investments that targets vulnerable households with incomes at or below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Providing safe, affordable and stable housing for Minnesota's families and workforce provides a vital foundation that enables thriving families – and a thriving economy.

Sincerely,

Kristen Rosenberger
Director, Advocacy & External Engagement
Greater Twin Cities United Way