

March 2, 2021



Dear Chair Schultz and Committee Members,

We urge you to support HF 601 to increase the Housing Support program's base rent rate. The maximum base rate for Housing Support (currently \$934) has not kept pace with the average cost of rent and the additional supports (like food, laundry, linens, etc.) required of the program. Beacon specializes in providing supportive housing, and Housing Support is a crucial investment tool in this critical resource.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative is a collaborative of 100 congregations that creates homes, shelters families, and organizes so that all people have a home. We operate sixteen buildings, around 700 homes.

Presently, around one hundred of those units are Housing Support clients living in supportive housing. Supportive housing is housing with services located in the building. It is the most dignified and effective way to give individuals and families the support they need to achieve stability in their lives.

Supportive housing is the most cost-effective long-term solution to homelessness. According to Wilder Research, in 2014, supportive housing provides a return of investment of \$1.44 for every public dollar invested. Housing Support funds supportive housing.

Beacon's creates its supportive housing buildings to fit the needs and services of target populations, like men leaving incarceration, youth who have experienced homelessness, and individuals who have experienced long-term homelessness. We would be happy to provide virtual and someday in-person tours of these homes to committee members.

Housing Support is a powerful and useful tool to fund supportive housing because it funds both the individual's rent costs and services together. When the rent rates do not keep up with the growing building and maintenance costs, providers must bridge the gap. This gap hinders the growth of supportive housing in our community.

Beacon has maintained high-quality homes on the current Housing Support rent rate, but it is harder to administer and impacts our capacity to grow. An additional \$100 would allow more individuals to benefit from supportive housing and encourage the development of this crucial resource in our community.

Please support HF 601 to allow supportive housing to continue to grow and meet all people's varied needs in our communities.

Thank You,

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