



Re: Support for HF3545 (Mekeland) as Amended

March 8, 2026

Co-Chair Baker, Co-Chair Pinto, and members of the Workforce, Labor and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of Housing First Minnesota, I am writing to express our support for the DE Amendment of HF3545 (Mekeland) in addressing Minnesota's residential energy code adoption framework.

Housing First Minnesota is a statewide trade association representing builders, remodelers, developers, and industry partners dedicated to advancing homeownership, supporting the residential construction industry, and promoting policies that help Minnesota build the housing our communities need.

Today, Minnesota's homebuilders proudly construct some of the most energy-efficient homes in the country. According to data from the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET), Minnesota leads the nation in energy-efficient home construction among states that test large numbers of homes. In 2024, [Minnesota tested nearly 9,000 homes](#) and achieved an average Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index score of 47—meaning the average new Minnesota home is approximately 53 percent more energy efficient than a standard new home.

This track record demonstrates that Minnesota builders are already delivering high-performance homes that reduce energy use and lower utility costs for homeowners. Programs such as Minnesota's Green Path have further strengthened the industry's commitment to energy efficiency through third-party testing, transparent performance reporting, and ongoing builder education.

However, maintaining the state statute as it currently stands will likely lead to significant increases in construction costs, with many homebuyers unlikely to realize a meaningful return on investment from those additional expenses. In other states and local jurisdictions where similar language has been adopted, we have seen building permit activity slow dramatically—or even come to a complete halt—as the industry works to understand and adapt to new requirements.

At a time when Minnesota faces a significant housing shortage, it is critical that state policy avoid creating barriers that could slow the production of new housing. Policies that unintentionally increase costs or delay construction will ultimately make it harder for Minnesotans to access safe, attainable homes.

Housing First Minnesota and its members remain committed to building safe, durable, and energy-efficient homes across our state. We appreciate the committee's attention to these issues



and look forward to continuing to work with policymakers to ensure Minnesota's building codes support both energy efficiency and housing affordability.

We urge you to support HF3545 as amended.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Foster". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Mark Foster,
Vice President, Legislative & Political Affairs
Housing First Minnesota

