

HENNEPIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 7, 2023

Representative Michael Howard, Chair
House Housing Finance and Policy Committee

Representative Howard,

I am writing you today in support of HF 2477, sending the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority a one-time grant of \$45 million dollars to clear the capital backlog on the agency's portfolio of 700+ deeply affordable family homes.

In Hennepin County, too many residents struggle to maintain stable housing, and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by the lack of affordable housing and are more likely to experience homelessness. While many factors contribute to housing affordability challenges, we know that housing costs are increasing, while incomes are stagnant or decreasing. There is also a significant lack of available housing that is affordable to people at the lowest income levels, where people of color are overrepresented.

We lack a stable and adequate supply of deeply affordable housing and funding provided in this bill would address this need. This state investment would both stabilize the lives of the 3,100 Minneapolis residents living in these homes today, 87 percent of whom are Black and 55 percent of whom are children under the age of 18, while also providing thousands of families access to safe, stable, affordable, permanent housing for decades to come.

The Minneapolis Public Housing Authority is an important partner to our addressing Hennepin's housing disparities. This partnership includes Hennepin County utilizing the agency's Emergency Housing Vouchers to assist with rapid-rehousing efforts of previously unsheltered individuals, placing individuals from the County's Coordinated Entry homeless assistance program into MPHA-owned housing, and granting MPHA \$500,000 last year to help the agency build 84 new deeply affordable family homes.

I urge the legislature to approve this one-time funding so the Authority can continue providing safe, stable, affordable, permanent housing to thousands of families for decades to come.

Sincerely,



Irene Fernando, Chair
Hennepin County Board of Commissioners

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