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March 10, 2023

Representative Michael Howard, Chair  
House Housing Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Representative Howard:

My name is Mary McGovern. I am president of the Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council and represent over 5000 public housing residents in Minneapolis. We stand in solidarity with our neighbors and family members living in scattered site housing.

Can we agree that all people - rich, poor, and in between - want and deserve to live in decent, safe and well-maintained housing. Unfortunately, low-income folks in our state and cities, who depend on publicly supported housing, too often do not actually have the experience of living in housing that is decent, safe, or well-maintained. This is largely because of years of underinvestment and disinvestment by the federal government in housing for our country's most vulnerable and in-need.

As a public housing resident leader I have heard all too often from local and state officials that public housing "is not our problem or responsibility." Well, guess what, that attitude does nothing to help us, and helping the most vulnerable among us is what we expect of elected officials at ALL levels of government, and what we urgently need.

The passage of this bill - this historic one-time investment of \$45 million to help the MPHA finally make a real dent in its over \$200 million backlog of capital needs - would show that you understand the role the State can and should have in ensuring ALL families, ALL children, truly get to experience decent, safe and well maintained housing. You'd want nothing less for your own.

With this funding, Minnesota would be leading the way in showing the importance of state investment in preserving public housing and its commitment to low-income citizens being treated with respect and dignity by local government. I urge you, please support this legislation.

Thank you.

Mary McGovern

Mary McGovern, President  
Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council

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