



Association of Minnesota Counties

March 6, 2023

Representative Michael Howard
Chair, House Housing Finance and Policy
473 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF2235 (Elkins) Legalizing Affordable Housing Act; land use and planning requirement provisions

Dear Chair Howard and Committee Members:

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), a membership-based organization representing all 87 Minnesota counties, appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on HF2235: Legalizing Affordable Housing Act; local land use and planning requirement provisions.

AMC has prioritized efforts to address housing challenges from emergency needs to workforce housing, including efforts to expand affordable housing capacity. We appreciate the sincere effort by Rep. Elkins to address these issues and look for creative solutions. However, we do not believe the bill will move us forward on these specific housing issues and creates some concerns for local governments in providing for services for the public.

- Article 8 would add building permits to the deadlines for agency action in M.S. 15.99: *Review and decisions on building permits are not akin to the other actions in this section of statute.* It would be difficult to complete all building permit work within these deadlines. This issue has been before the courts and building permits have been specifically excluded.
- Article 3, section 1 addresses the relationship between county official controls and their comprehensive plan: *Comprehensive plans are broad policy statements for future development and this language seems to suggest more specificity exists or that the plan should include more detail of how or when development might occur.* In addition, official controls are already required to follow the comprehensive plan under case law.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts on the proposal. We are happy to continue discussing these issues with the author and will continue to work with the committee on additional strategies to address our housing needs.

Sincerely,



Brian Martinson, Policy Analyst
Association of Minnesota Counties