



March 12, 2021

House Judiciary Committee Chair Jamie Becker-Finn

Minority Lead Peggy Scott

75 Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd

St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Rep. Becker-Finn and Rep. Scott,

I write in support of the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition funding request. The member programs of the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition are valued partners and collaborators in our organization's efforts to end veteran homelessness in Minnesota. We work closely with these programs to ensure that our state's veterans have access to justice in civil legal issues related to homelessness and their expertise is invaluable to our small in-house legal team.

Civil legal services are key to protecting the rights of our state's most vulnerable residents and ensuring they have access to justice and know their rights. This has been highlighted this year during the COVID-19 crisis and eviction moratorium, and our legal aid partners have been crucial in providing updated information on the moratorium, representing low-income veterans facing unlawful eviction, and referring veterans to our organization for supportive and financial assistance. We are grateful for their continuing efforts to ensure low-income veterans across the state of Minnesota have access to high-quality legal services. Due to resource limitations, civil legal aid offices are not able to meet the demand for their services and are also unable to offer competitive salaries relative to other public sector entities. It is critical to fully fund civil legal services to ensure they can continue meeting our community's critical needs.

Sincerely,

Neal Loidolt
CEO/President
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans