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Dear Chair Hausman and Members of the Housing Finance and Policy Committee:

CommonBond Communities supports Bring it Home, MN, HF 40, a bill that would create a Minnesota rent subsidy program so all low-income renters can afford their home. I urge you to do the same.

As you are aware, we are in a housing crisis on many levels. This crisis existed before the pandemic and is only getting worse, setting lowest-income families back even further in our communities. Emergency relief is needed, but a long-term transformation is required to move our state forward.

The 2021 Bring it Home, MN legislation (HF 40) will make a significant difference in the life of renters with low incomes. This rent subsidy program is a solution that fully meets the need—helping all low-income Minnesota renters afford their homes.

Bring it Home, MN is a cost-effective, simple, proven policy solution to end the housing instability crisis that 550,000 Minnesotans face in every corner of the state. Statistics show that roughly 70% of low-income residents make critical choices every month between housing and other basic necessities—including food, medications, etc. Quality of life activities, including tutoring, recreation, sports, are put on the back burner—which further widens the health and opportunity gaps.

These examples play out every day at CommonBond Communities—as a nonprofit affordable housing provider, we serve close to 13,000 low-income residents every year. For example, at this point in the pandemic, a significant number of CommonBond residents are behind on rent payments—CommonBond is now approaching \$2 million in uncollected rental receipts. As another example, roughly 4,000 CommonBond residents are youth—and many of their parents are employed in low-wage positions which require them to be onsite for their roles. The adults are forced to choose between going to their job or being home to take care of their children who are doing school remotely.

With HF 40, paying the difference between what a family can afford and a reasonable rent provides stability to the family—but also benefits the whole community by improving health, expanding the educational success of youth, and leading to a more stable workforce. I urge you to support HF 40, Bring it Home, MN.

Sincerely,

Thomas Adams, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President of Housing & Services
CommonBond Communities