

March 1, 2021
HF 1484

Dear Madam chair and members,

As a resident of St. Paul and a member of Mosaic Christian Community, **I write in support of HF 1484, which will help us bring a Sacred Settlement to our church property on the Eastside of St. Paul, in my neighborhood.**

Years ago, my husband and I lived in Hartford, Connecticut. We became friendly with a couple, in crisis, experiencing homelessness- Miguel and Bonnie. There were so many barriers in trying to find them appropriate shelter. Sometimes, they spent the bitter nights outside on the cold granite steps of our church. And we thought "there has got to be a better way for the church to respond."

We lost touch with Miguel and Bonnie, we moved to St Paul, we found a community and a church. We looked around at tent encampments and full shelters, and thought "there has got to be a way for the church to respond". So our church piloted a program- the Safe Parking Program- We have the support of the police, the city council, and most importantly, our neighbors.

And yet- there has got to be something else we can do. Our church has a tiny plot of land and a modest building. And when the non profit Settled reached out to us and cast a vision for permanent homes and community for a few of our brothers and sisters... our church said YES- We can fit six tiny homes on our land. We can renovate our building to be a common house with showers, laundry, meeting rooms, and a kitchen. We can make room for a table for 12!

I understand this isn't for every church but for us, it simply makes sense. We are dedicated to joining with God and our neighbors in making the East Side a safe, peaceful, loving community. We are committed to a lifestyle of hospitality.

This neighborhood is my home. I would only ever be in support of what is best for my home. We want it to thrive, to be clean and safe. **We talked to our neighbors, held information sessions, knocked on doors, passed out invitations to tour the homes. For our Sacred Settlement, residents will have undergone background checks, been interviewed, signed a Housing Agreement and will pay rent. All residents must also abide by community rules and a Good Neighbor Agreement.**

As people are sleeping outside tonight in freezing temperatures, this bill is timely. This bill helps Minnesotans be the kind of people we want to be. **It allows our church to be the church we want to be-** people who can say to a few of our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness, "come." Come where you are, come as you are. Come, welcome home.

I respectfully request you support this bill.

Thank you,

Meredith Campbell