February 8, 2023

Chair Michael Howard

House Housing Finance and Policy Committee

RE: House File 814

473 State Office Building

St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Howard,

Thank you and the Members of the Committee for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House File 814.

My name is David Larson, and I am the Government Affairs Director for Cooperative Network. Our members are owned by millions of residents throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin and include member-owned farm supply, dairy marketing, livestock marketing, financial, health care, mutual insurance, processing, electric utility, housing, food, and worker-owned cooperatives, among others.

We appreciate Representative Norris and his co-authors for bringing this important bill in front of the Committee to expand housing options across the state of Minnesota. Manufactured housing cooperatives represent affordable homeownership for members of any community, and are imperative in regions where businesses struggle to retain their workforce due to a lack of housing.

House File 814 not only continues the transition of manufactured homes from being treated as “personal property” to “real property”, it would also invest substantial funding through lending and infrastructure improvement options. This legislature has publicly stated that first-time homeownership is a priority, and this bill would help the push towards that goal with manufactured housing cooperatives serving as an affordable option. Also, the establishment of the manufactured home park cooperative purchase program would allow current residents access to the necessary funds to purchase their community and become a cooperative, which would then open the door to securing traditional financing on the property and pay back the loan fund.

On behalf of our cooperative members, we respectfully request your support of House File 814.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Larson

Government Affairs Director

Cooperative Network

CC: Members of the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee