



# Association of Minnesota Counties

March 2, 2021

Representative Jennifer Schultz  
473 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

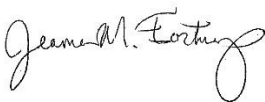
Dear Chair Schultz and Members of the House Human Services Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), an association representing all of Minnesota's 87 counties, I write to issue our strong support for HF601 (Her), a bill seeking to modify Minnesota's Housing Support program. Minnesota is experiencing a housing crisis and homelessness is on the rise across the state. Housing Support is a statewide program that exists to help people achieve and maintain housing stability. Counties across the state recognize now more than ever that housing stabilization is a key to prevent homelessness. In turn, housing stability creates economic self-sufficiency and strong communities.

Current law limits the number of days a Housing Support recipient can be absent from their residence to no more than 18 days at a time. This poses a challenge to residents requiring hospitalization for a chronic medical condition or illness like COVID-19, as well as those with a history of substance use or mental illness who may benefit from and wish to enroll in longer term treatment programs. By seeking recommended treatment, they face the difficult position of losing their housing, which threatens to throw them back into homelessness. The bill HF601 waives temporary absence requirements to ensure residents are not penalized for seeking needed healthcare, including substance use or mental health treatment.

On behalf of counties, AMC thanks Representative Her for her efforts and urges you to support HF601 which provides housing stability for those most need it throughout our state.

Sincerely,



Jeanna Fortney, Policy Analyst  
Association of Minnesota Counties