

## OPINION

### Future uncertain for homelessness resources

The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (MCH) is comprised of over 70 member agencies throughout the state. It is a nonpartisan organization supporting state policy that promotes housing stability and economic security across Minnesota.

The 2022 policy agenda included a holistic approach to supporting legislation to provide resources for people facing homelessness throughout the entirety of their journey to find a permanent home. During the last legislative session, MCH put forward several policy agenda items to address safety and

dignity of every Minnesotan on their journey to find stable housing. MCH emphasizes that fully funding programs that provide support and resources to end homelessness is the key to addressing the crisis that exists in our communities.

Firstly, MCH had identified over \$100 Million in shelter capital needs throughout Minnesota that would create or preserve over 2,000 shelter beds. They advocated to create Shelter Infrastructure Bonds (SIBs) to provide funds to expand, preserve, and rehabilitate shelters to create safe, low-barrier temporary housing for people

experiencing homelessness. Their initiatives included HF3090 and SF3140 which were proposed to secure these resources.

Secondly, with HF3294 and SF3143, MCH advocated for \$95 Million over the next three years for Emergency Services Program, which would allow organizations and local communities to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness. This would provide funding to support operations, staffing, and resources to support families and individuals.

Thirdly, due to lack of affordable Transitional Housing Pro-

grams from 24 to 36 months. This request was addressed in HF3200 and SF2949. This was approved.

Fourthly, MCH was in favor of HF3244, which would have provided \$400 million in HIBs to develop affordable homes and \$100 Million in General Obligation Bonds to create public housing, expand options, and cultivate long-term stability.

Only one of the proposed bills was resolved in the 2022 session, which perpetuates financial insecurity for organizations like Partners for Housing (P4H) as they continue to address the needs of the communities they serve. Some very highly effective programs continue to be underfunded and are unable to meet the increasing need across

the state. Because of this, service providers are facing a funding cliff that will impact thousands of individuals, families and seniors that are seeking shelter and support. At a fundamental level, this is an issue that cannot be solved without additional funding.

Within the past two weeks, P4H executive director, Jen Therman, and other key staff have had the opportunity to discuss with local representatives Luke Frederick and Jeff Brand, the unmet needs for emergency shelters, transitional housing and low-cost rentals in Blue Earth and Nicollet counties.

Brand and Frederick have agreed to keep homelessness and housing in the top agenda



#### Another View

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items for the 2023 session, which commences in September 2022. In the meantime, P4H must rely heavily on grants, donations from individuals, and fundraising events to continue the services they are offering in St. Peter, Mankato, Le Sueur County, and surrounding communities. Community members are encouraged to reach out to local legislators to share concerns or ask for their support.