

4/15/2024

**RE: Support for SF4254 a-2 (Port)**

Sen. Dzierdzic and Members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee:

We write to you as local elected leaders from communities across the state of Minnesota. We each stepped up to serve, sometimes at great personal sacrifice, because we care deeply about our neighbors and our communities and we bring that care to every conversation we have and decision we make about housing and development in our communities. We are writing to you because we support the Multifamily Housing bill (SF 4254 a-2) and ask that you work to ensure its passage this year. We do not speak on behalf of our entire cities, but want you to know that individual local elected leaders from around the state support this important action.

We must address our state's housing and affordability crisis, where 49% of Minnesota renters are cost burdened by their rent and we are over 100,000 homes short of what Minnesotans need. This disproportionately impacts families of color due to our worst-in-the-nation racial disparities in homeownership rates for Black and White households. All of this is apparent in our local contexts. We know it is harder and harder for working people, young families, and retirees to afford their home. We do not want to lead cities where teachers, firefighters, nurses, and anyone else who makes less than \$60,000 a year has no way to put down roots in our community. The status quo isn't working for most Minnesotans, and the tools we have locally are inadequate to meet this statewide need.

This moment requires action from you, our partners at the legislature, because no single municipality can solve this crisis on our own. This year's proposed Multifamily Housing bill will help our communities by:

- Allowing more homes to be built around our community so families of all income ranges can find the housing they need where they want to live
- Increasing overall housing supply which has been shown to help stabilize housing costs, allowing the people we care about to afford to still live here
- Reducing emissions and vehicle-miles-traveled by allowing more people to live closer to their work, school, family, and amenities, with additional incentives to build near transit
- Reducing suburban sprawl by allowing greater density in already developed areas
- Reducing the number of steps - and time - needed to approve a housing project that already aligns with our city's comprehensive plan and zoning requirements

We want to build a state where every Minnesotan - regardless of income, skin color, or zip code - can afford and find the type of home they want to live in, in the community they want to live in. We're asking for your help this year to move us closer to that reality.

Thank you,

City Council Member Gretchen Lee, Badger  
Commissioner Joe Gould, Beltrami County  
City Council Member Marquita Butler, Brooklyn Center  
School Board Member Jessica Schwinn, Centennial School District  
Mayor Amáda Márquez Simula, Columbia Heights

*(more signatures on next page)*

City Council Member Rachel James, Columbia Heights  
City Council Member Azrin Awal, Duluth  
City Council Member Wendy Durrwachter, Duluth  
City Council Member Mike Mayou, Duluth  
City Council Member Paula Mielke, Falcon Heights  
School Board Member Jen Westmoreland, Hopkins  
City Council Member Jeremiah Ellison, Minneapolis  
City Council Member Katie Cashman, Minneapolis  
City Council Member Andrea Jenkins, Minneapolis  
City Council Member Dr. Kimberly Wilburn, Minnetonka  
City Council Member Patsy Foster-Bolton, Minnetonka  
City Council Member Clark Gregor, Plymouth  
City Council Member Julie Pointner, Plymouth  
City Council Member Ben Whalen, Richfield  
City Council Member Aaron Wagner, Robbinsdale  
City Council Member Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick, Rochester  
City Council Member Molly L. Dennis, Rochester  
City Council Member Sue Budd, St. Louis Park  
City Council Member Margaret Rog, St. Louis Park  
City Council President Mitra Jalali, St. Paul  
City Council Member Anika Bowie, St. Paul  
City Council Member Hwa Jeong Kim, St. Paul  
City Council Member Robyn Gulley, West St. Paul