

## 2019 Minnesota Legislative Successes

People experiencing homelessness, advocates, people of faith, and organizations worked together to secure \$78 million in new investments for emergency shelter, rental assistance, and preservation and new production. (MICAH worked with Street Voices of Change, Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, Welfare Rights Coalition, APAC, Second Chance Coalition, Restore the Vote, Homes for All, JRLC, and NAMI).

### ***HOMES for All Agenda:***

#### ***Passed***

- \$60 million in Housing Infrastructure Bonds to build and preserve affordable housing.
- \$5 million increase in one-time funding to the Economic Development & Housing Challenge Program, a key funding source to develop affordable multifamily and single-family homes.
- \$10 million/biennium increase in ongoing funding to MHFA
  - \$3.5 million/ biennium Homework Starts With Home
  - \$3.5 million/biennium increase to Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program(FHPAP)
  - \$2 million/biennium to Manufactured Home Grants
  - \$500,000/biennium to Workforce Homeownership Program
  - \$500,000/biennium increase to Bridges
- \$3 million one-time funding to Emergency Services Program (Department of Health & Human Services)
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#### ***Did not pass***

- General Obligation (GO) Bonds. GO Bonds finance the rehabilitation of publicly-owned housing.
- Local Housing Trust Fund state match. While the match was included in the Governor's budget, other programs were ultimately prioritized in the final budget.
- Housing initiatives in the tax bill, including the affordable #HousingTaxCredit. Between efforts to conform to federal tax changes and disputes over increasing the gas tax and repealing the sunset on the provider tax, there wasn't enough to fund a new investment in housing.
- Lead Safe Homes- \$2 million program to address lead paint poisoning issues in rental housing.

The **Minnesota Legislature** passed proposals backed by **All Parks Alliance for Change (APAC)**, and endorsed by the **Homes for All MN** coalition, to close loopholes in the state **Right of First Refusal** law. Flaws in the existing law doomed a 2017 attempt by residents of the **Lowry Grove** manufactured (mobile) home park to buy their community and prevent it from being closed by a developer. A newly strengthened and streamlined process passed as part of the **Omnibus Agriculture Department, Rural Development, and Housing Finance Bill**.

The **Minnesota Legislature** also passed proposals backed by **APAC** to strengthen the state's **Manufactured Home Relocation Trust Fund**, which nearly exhausted its funds in 2017 as the result of two expensive park closures. When parks close, home owners receive reasonable compensation to either move their homes or, if it cannot be moved, replace their home through a buy-out. The program is funded an annual \$15 fee paid by the residents and a one-time per home payment made by the park owner when they close their community (ranging from \$3,250 to \$6,000). The changes adopted as part of the **Omnibus Housing Finance Bill** increase the fund balance cap from \$1 million to \$2 million, allow **Minnesota Housing** to advance funds when needed, improve the collection system for the \$15 fee, and increase oversight and reporting.

### **Additional Legislative Updates (Health and Human Services)**

- Beginning in February 2020, MFIP families will receive an additional \$100/month - the first increase in 33 years
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program. \$375,000 for FY2020, and another \$375,000 appropriated in FY2021 for the Prevention Program.
- The provider tax used to fund health care for low income Minnesotans will remain in effect, with a reduction from 2% to 1.8%.
- Families experiencing homelessness will now be eligible for childcare assistance for up to three months as they look for employment and housing. Applications for child care assistance for these families will now be expedited, with an eligibility decision in 5 days.
- The time limit on use of the portability pool for families using the child care program is removed. Currently, if a family moves to a county with a waiting list, child care assistance can be terminated after 6 months.
- The Working Family Credit for low- and moderate-income families was expanded.
- Over the next two years, \$450,000 will be available to nonprofits (for example, synagogues and mosques) for security measures to protect from terrorism.

There was no action on suspending driver's licenses for failure to pay traffic fines or allowing courts to waive, reduce or substitute community services for traffic fines. Other unsuccessful efforts include limits on payday lending, driver's licenses for immigrants, and gun violence prevention.

Thanks to your calls, letters and emails, **we made substantial gains this session!**