SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CHENIQUA JOHNSON, CHAIR

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May 14, 2025

Senate and House State/Local Government Conferees

Subject: Request to Adopt Ramsey County HRA to Include Economic Development Authority Functions – State and Local Government Omnibus Bill (SF 3045 (Xiong))

Dear Senator Xiong and Committee Members,

I am writing, on behalf of the City of Saint Paul's Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA), to vocalize our support in Ramsey County's effort to expand the statutory authority of the Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to include economic development activities through the establishment of an Economic Development Authority (EDA).

The City of Saint Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority acknowledges that the proposed legislative change would allow for small business programming to be included as an eligible use of Ramsey County's existing HRA levy, without creating a new taxing authority or increasing property taxes for Ramsey County residents.

Ramsey County's expansion to an EDA would enable the county to better support local businesses through enhanced technical assistance, capacity building for business support organizations, and access to additional flexible capital. It is important to note that the City of Saint Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority also intends to utilize our ability to choose whether we will opt-in or opt-out of this expansion once and if this legislation moves forward. Our goal is to continue to remain steadfast on our commitment to affordable housing and redevelopment initiatives while also working to uphold our support for small businesses and our City.

With that being said, we do understand the importance of collaboration in achieving these goals and respectfully request your support for this legislative change. Your endorsement will help ensure that Ramsey County is positioned to provide the necessary resources and programming to support businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the region.

The City of St. Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority supports Ramsey County's request and would encourage you to approve the request for expanded authority this session.

Sincerely,

Councilmember Cheniqua Johnson Annan, Chair of the Saint Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority