



September 17, 2021

Consumer Affairs Office  
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
121 7th Place East  
Suite 350 St. Paul MN 55101

Submitted via email: [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us) and online at [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)

Re: Docket No E,G-999/CI-20-375

To whom it may concern:

I write on behalf of Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP) to support the request by MHFA to prohibit utility disconnections until April 30, 2022, for customers with a pending application for RentHelpMN.

Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP) strengthens development capacity and promotes systems change to expand opportunity, especially for those with the greatest need. We support, lead, and collaborate with a diversity of partners to stimulate innovation and drive positive impact in affordable housing and community development in Minnesota and beyond. We provide capacity building in rural communities and Native Nations, produce original research, and advocate for policies that advance affordable housing and strengthen communities.

Our public health crisis and economic crisis continues with the surging Delta variant. Minnesotans, especially those who are economically marginalized, are in desperate need of assistance to remain healthy and housed. With significant federal funds available, eligible Minnesotans must not have their utilities disconnected, or be evicted from their homes, for lack of funds. Failure to prevent utility shut offs and evictions for those qualifying for funds is also a civil right issue, as harm will fall disproportionately to Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and Minnesotans of Color.

RentHelpMN, the state program that distributes federal allocations of Emergency Rental Assistance that total \$518 million, permits application for utility arrears as well as future payments. According to the RentHelpMN dashboard, as of September 17 the program has received applications for almost \$15 million in electric, gas, and bulk fuel costs.

Along with LIHEAP/EAP, we strongly support the request that the Public Utilities Commission modify Order Point 5 from May 26, 2021, to include the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance program (RentHelpMN) as a listed program prohibiting disconnection of customers with past due balances who have a pending application or are eligible for assistance through April 30, 2022.



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Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Glidden", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Elizabeth Glidden  
Deputy Executive Director